Misunderstood Children

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For my dear friends —
kindest of critics, best of encouragers
Jean C. and Frances M. Arnold
with love from Elizabeth Harrison

MISUNDERSTOOD CHILDREN

SKETCHES TAKEN FROM LIFE

BY

ELIZABETH HARRISON

AUTHOR OF "A STUDY OF CHILD-NATURE," "TWO CHILDREN OF THE FOOTHILLS," "SOME SILENT TEACHERS," "IN STORYLAND," ETC.

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This book is dedicated

to

Those many blessed mothers who, though students in my "Mothers-classes," have taught me far more than I could teach them.

Their earnestness, their wise and loving patience, their consecration to their high and holy work, have made me realize, in part at least, what this world of ours will be when all mothers awaken to the greatness of their vocation.

Elizabeth Harrison.

Chicago Kindergarten College,
Chicago, Ill.

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FOREWORD.

Of the three great World Disciplines, Religion, Philosophy and Psychology, the last named is much the latest and the least understood. Men have struggled with the conception of *God* from the earliest dawn of consciousness. The rudest, most uncivilized savages have some form of worship for the unseen power that is greater than man; and it is an interesting study to trace the slow but steady growth of the *God-idea* from the fetish worship of the early race to the conception of God as advanced by the Christian church of to-day. We need but to look back to the Egyptian ideas of the gods, or even to the conception of God as held by the Middle Ages, to realize how this great World-Discipline has advanced and enlarged man's conception of Divine Power. Philosophy also has taken enormous strides since the days of old Thales of Miletus, who six hundred years before the Christian era declared the essence of all things to be water. He was the greatest of philosophic thinkers in his day. We smile now at

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the childishness of this effort to define the essential unity of *Nature*.

And yet the day is not far distant when mankind will read with incredulity of the idea of *man* which has been held in the past and is still held by many unthinking or prejudiced people of to-day. Psychology, the latest of the all-embracing Disciplines of the mind of man, is, in its way, doing as much to clarify and enlarge our ideas of *man* as Religion and Philosophy have done in the matter of giving us better and more exalted ideas of *God* and *Nature*.

Which one of us is it who does not feel that he or she possesses unused ability that might have developed into real talent, sometimes almost into "genius" if it had been given a chance. It is for the sake of these "might-bes" in each human soul that I plead for a better and more sympathetic understanding of children. No inheritance of money or of social position, so fiercely striven after by so many parents, can compare with the gift of a free and fully developed childhood.

That this gift may be within the reach of all earnest-thinking parents is what makes the practical results already attained by Psychol-

ogy so important. What may yet be attained is beyond our present power to imagine.

Our best schools have already been transformed by the placing of the study of children's instincts and interests upon a scientific basis. The sulky child, the moody child, the quick-tempered child, the restless child, the slow child, are no longer considered an affliction sent by the Lord, nor is the boy who steals and the girl who lies regarded as specimens of original sin. The inheritance of the child is, if possible, ascertained, his environment is studied, as it is now a well-established fact that these play an important part in his makeup and must be taken into account in the treatment of the case if any permanent good is to be accomplished.

It is also now an accepted scientific fact that the child's bodily condition reacts upon his mental condition. A physically uncomfortable child cannot learn as readily as a child whose physical organs are in right working condition. Hence underfed and ill-kept children are fed and given a bath in our best schools, the seats and desks in the schoolroom are adjusted to their heights, the windows are arranged so that the light will not irritate the

eyes, and proper ventilation of the schoolroom is sought, in order that each child may get the maximum of good out of his school life.

Psychology has also taught us of the reaction of mind upon body. An unhappy child cannot digest his food as well as a child who is in a cheerful mood, nor can he study as well. Hence, the rod has vanished and the ferrule is hidden, and that still worse instrument of torture—sarcasm—is disappearing. An atmosphere of sunshine and cheerfulness is demanded in order that a child may be kept in good physical condition. I know of some wise mothers who so fully understand this interaction of body and mind that they never permit the mealtime to be taken for scolding or criticism. In fact, some of them save up the funny story or interesting incident until the meal-time so that the table hour becomes the happiest hour in their children's day. And it is well worth the effort, for happiness is as necessary for normal, wholesome growth in childhood as sunshine is necessary for the right growth of plants. The fact that too much excitement or too great fatigue causes blood-poison is another of the important facts which a scientific study of children has estab-

lished. Much more could be said upon this subject, but this is not the time nor the place for it.

The great science of Psychology has not only thrown much light upon this reaction of body and mind, but in its deeper, more profound unfolding shows us the laws by which mental and spiritual growth can best be developed. For example—we know now that a child is only in the serene, contented condition of mind which best promotes inner growth when he is following a *rational line of conduct*—rational as far as he can comprehend it. The child who is left too long to his own government becomes capricious, fretful and unhappy. Most of the obstinacy manifested by children is due to the caprice of those in control of them. The child does not see the rationality of the command. To him it is the parent's or teacher's individual will pitted against his individual will, and the instinct of freedom in him rises up to resist as surely as certain gases rise to the surface when other gases are added to a chemical combination. It may not be *your* fault that you suddenly find yourself in conflict with an obstinate child, but it is somebody's fault that he has not learned

the *impersonal justice* that lies in every rational command to the extent that he has been able to grasp it. What I mean is that arguing with an obstinate child never helps him. What he needs, in most cases, is to be given the rational grounds for a command calmly and in an impersonal way, and then be given time and quiet in which to conquer himself. If the command is of such a nature that he cannot grasp the rationality of it, or if he is in such a condition that he will not accept it, then, of course, authority must be used. Too much license is as bad for a child as is too much control. The former develops weakness of purpose and waywardness that unfits him for personal comradeship and co-operation in the world's work; the latter suppresses him and hinders the growth of that originality by means of which he can best add to the higher enrichment of mankind. The one is as bad as the other. The right understanding of the development of the will from mere desire to rational choice helps us to avoid the Scylla of undue authority on the one hand and the Charybdis of undue license on the other hand.

Perhaps an anecdote will best illustrate this important point in child-training:

The story was told me by a young Englishman who was visiting for the first time his brother in Chicago, who had married an American woman, well versed in the psychology of the kindergarten. "The first evening after my arrival," said he, "my little niece of six was vexed by some trifle, and thereupon she set up a lusty bawl. My sister-in-law said, without the slightest tone of disturbance in her voice, 'Charlotte, your noise is disturbing the rest of us. You must either stop bawling or go upstairs to the nursery where you can be by yourself.' The child continued to bawl," added the young man, "and much to my amazement my sister-in-law quietly took out her watch and said: 'I will give you just two minutes in which to decide whether you will cease bawling and remain with us, or go up to the nursery.' "She stood perfectly still," he continued, laughingly, "holding her watch in her hand. At the end of the two minutes she said: 'Your two minutes are up; you have made your choice,' and with a slight wave of her hand she pointed to the door. The youngster deliberately turned round and walked out

of the room and up the stairs towards the nursery, still bawling. I turned in my astonishment to my sister-in-law and said, 'How in the world did you make her do it?' She answered, 'My kindergarten training taught me to treat my children as rational beings with wills that must be respected as well as trained. I gave her her choice. She went upstairs of her own free will to the nursery and yet she obeyed the laws of social consideration. Therefore, because she does not feel that she has been unjustly treated, she will the sooner conquer herself and come back.' And sure enough, in less than ten minutes, back came the little miss, as sweet and gracious as if nothing had happened." He had told this story in great glee, but when ended his mood changed, and, in a serious tone, he added, "If that is the way all American mothers teach their children self-control, your republican government is on a sure foundation."

SAMMIE'S PRAYER.

She was a good woman—that aunt of his. That is, she tried to do her duty, and she was very fond of the small three-year-old nephew who was the one bit of sunshine and joy in the sad home of herself and her old father. She always kept the little fellow in spotlessly clean clothing and was careful to see that his food was well cooked and of the right sort. Also, that he went to bed early and had plenty of sleep. But sometimes she was lacking in that virtue beyond all other virtues in the mothering of the child—far more needed by tender young souls than clean bodies and wholesome food and abundant sleep—namely, the power to understand. Who has not erred in this respect?

Many were the lessons which the child unconsciously taught her. For she was a sensitive soul herself, and struggled hard to take a mother's place in the life of the child. Being a spinster, she did not know how many times even mothers err in this same way by lack of sympathetic perception of how a child may look at a situation.

One bright spring morning she was hurrying to finish her sweeping that she might set the home in order and get off for some church work she had planned to do. They were old-fashioned people and their floors were covered with thick ingrain carpets which yield up a heap of fluff and dust, no matter how often they are swept. She had just swept the fluff to the edge of the dustpan when—swish! swung the side door and in rushed the young nephew, and with him in whirled a gale of wind! The dust and fluff went swirling and dancing all over the room. She looked up, but did not see the glad light in the boy's eyes and did not hear the anticipation of sympathy that rang in his joyful voice as he cried:

"Oh, Aunty, just come out here and see the new flowers that have come up! They are going to have a party, I think."

As I said before, she was in a hurry and was anxious to get through her morning work and to get off on her church errand. So she only answered in an annoyed tone: "Dear! dear! Sammie! See what you have done! Go out and shut that door!"

The boy looked disappointed, but he was an obedient child, so he stepped out on the side

porch and gently shut the door. Somehow the day did not look quite so bright with no one to share with him his new and rich discovery of unexpected and, to him, marvelous new blossoms on the primrose plants. But he waited a long, long time alone on the porch; at least, it seemed to him a long, long time.

She in the meanwhile hastily re-swept the room with never a thought of the little boy waiting outside. She merely added a trifle of nervous haste to her work, so as to make up for the lost time. Once more she collected the fluff and dust into a pile and was stooping to sweep it into the dustpan when the door cautiously opened a little and a patient child's face appeared in the space, with the words: "Aren't you 'most ready now?" But with the opening of the door in came the spring breeze again. And again off whirled and danced the fluff and dust! She was angry now. True, she had not thought to explain to him why she wanted the door kept shut, nor had she assured him that she would let him know when he might open it. But she did not stop to think of this. He had disobeyed her *intentions.*

He ought to have understood. She would

be obliged to sweep the room all over again! And she would be late for her church calls! The child's innocent eyes were looking up at her. He had become tired of waiting and he simply was asking if she could not come and share his new joy. He had never swept a room, so he had not noticed that the dust had been scattered by the wind. Just a word of explanation would have made him go off happily to some new activity to await her coming. But no. She was in a hurry, and that room must be swept all over again! It was too provoking! With resentment tingling in her tone she sharply exclaimed:

"Sammie, go out of this room immediately! And shut that door! You are a naughty, naughty boy!"

The door closed with a bang! A moment more a chair was overthrown on the porch. The boy in his turn was now angry. She bit her lip and once more began the resweeping of the room. Bang! Bang! went two more chairs on the porch floor. As I have said, she was a good woman and she was conscientious about the child. She must not let him give way to his temper. He must learn to control it. Now came a kick against the door. This

was too much! She could not have him act that way toward her. It was not treating her with proper respect. She stopped sweeping, leaned the broom against a chair, and, going to the porch door, opened it and in a tone of angry command said: "Sammie, you are a naughty boy! Come with me! I shall have to shut you up until you can be good!" He straightened himself up and gave a kick at a flower-pot which stood near by. (I have, myself, felt the relief of overstrained nerves which came from slamming a door or throwing a collar on the floor. Haven't you?)

"There you are again," she cried; "you nearly knocked that flower-pot off the porch! Come here, you naughty boy!" She took hold of his hand and led him into an adjoining bedroom. "There!" she said, sternly; "you must stay in this room until you can promise me that you will be a good boy. You have been very naughty, and Aunty doesn't love you." With that she went out and shut the door behind her.

Instantly the overwrought nerves of the child, assisted by his wounded pride and violated sense of justice, found vent in a series of screams accompanied by furious kicking on

the door. With the turning of the knob he could have opened it. But the bond between him and his much loved aunt was still strong enough for her word to mean law to him. The kicking and screaming soon subsided into long, heartbreaking sobs. And in justice to her I must say that the aunt outside the door was as unhappy as the sobbing boy inside the bedroom. But she went on sweeping with a flushed face and painfully compressed lips. Now that she was "in for it" she must "stick it out," she said to herself. The boy's temper must be conquered. All thoughts of the church errand were banished now. She was a good woman and she knew that bringing the child back to a harmonious relation with herself was the paramount duty of that morning. All things else were as naught compared with that.

Soon the deep, heavy sobs ceased, and her tenderly alert ear could hear the catching of the breath that comes after a passionate outburst. She hoped he would promise to be good, for she had told him that he would have to stay imprisoned until he was ready to make a promise to do better. How could she take the cessation of sobs for repentance?

He must say he would be good. So she nervously dusted and set in order the room, lingering now here and now there, so as to be ready to open the door as soon as the boy should confess his naughtiness. Her heart was aching now and it was hard work to keep back the tears. What would a real mother do? Would his own mother have punished him so? A choking lump came into her throat; still, she could not allow him to fly into such tempests. He must learn to control himself. And so reasoning the pros and cons of the case, with her heart all the time crying out for the boy, she loitered in the room.

At last a weak, tired little voice with the sobs still echoing in it called through the door: "I will be good, Aunty"—a sob—"I will be good." A sob—but stifled now. Instantly the door was opened and in a moment more the child was nestling in his foster mother's arms. And she was whispering in his ear: "Aunty is so glad to have her boy back again. She was so sorry to have to punish him." The child made no reply, but clung closer to her; his lip still trembled; the sobs, coming now and then as she rocked him to and fro, grew fainter and fainter; the loving arms that were

clasped around her neck gently relaxed their hold, and soon the quiet, peaceful breathing told that the child, exhausted by his emotions, was asleep. Nature had come to his rescue and was undoing the mischief done by the poisoning of his blood with the violent excitement of the previous hour. Gently the aunt laid the limp little body on a cot, and, bending over him, she tenderly kissed the tear-stained face. For, as I have said before, she was a good woman and she dearly loved the child.

When he awoke an hour afterward, refreshed and renewed by his nap, all traces of the storm had passed away, and the two spent a happy day together.

That evening when the little white-robed form, kneeling before her with his face buried in her lap, had finished his "Now I lay me down to sleep," she leaned over and said: "Doesn't my little boy want to ask God to help him to keep from being naughty any more?"

The small head bowed a little lower. The child's body trembled slightly, but he remained silent.

The aunt waited. She must help him to confess his sin. He had acted wrongly and he must ask God to forgive him. This would help to impress the lesson on him.

Blind soul! She knew not what she was doing! She waited. Still the little figure kneeled before her, with his face hidden in his hands and buried on her lap. She gently laid her hand upon his head, and, bending lower, whispered: "Can't my darling ask God to help him to be a good boy?"

Again a tremor passed over him. Then in a low, timid voice he said: "Please, God, make Sammie to be a good boy." Then, as if the flood of recollection of the morning were to much for him, he added in a tone that rang with the intensity of his petition: "And, O God, please don't let Aunt Betty speak that way to me any more!"

The scales fell from her eyes. And with the tears streaming down her cheeks she picked him up, and as she kissed him again and again she told him that she would ask God that night to help her to be hereafter a good aunt and to refrain from ever speaking crossly to him again.

Do you wonder, my reader, that alone in my

room that night I prayed: "O God, O God, help me never again to cause one of Thy little ones to stumble and fall?"

THE BOY WHO HATED SCHOOL.

"Oh! mamma! Do I *have to* go to school this afternoon." The words were uttered in such a tone of desperation that I looked up quickly from my book to the tall overgrown boy of eleven who stood nervously twisting his cap in his hands while he shifted awkwardly from one foot to the other. The length of his arms and legs in proportion to the rest of his body told my practiced eyes that the surg within preparatory to the coming manhood had already begun. Nature was putting forth her utmost effort to increase the boy's height before the final miracle of adolescence should demand all his vitality. Almost every atom of his strength was being used in this rapid physical growth.

His mother looked puzzled and somewhat perplexed as she replied, "Of course you must go to school, my son. You are not ill, are you?" "No," answered the boy with a sigh. "Wish I was sick!" Then he burst out with "I *hate* school! I wish I never had to go to school another day!" The mother rose and

going over to where he stood laid her hand gently on his brow. The expression of anxiety left her face. "You have no fever. Why don't you want to go to school?"

"Oh! I don't know!" answered the boy, and he twisted himself away from her caressing hand. Already the fast approaching manhood within him was rejecting the caress which his childhood had loved. Then he added in an undertone, "I *hate* school and I *hate* my teacher!" "Well, we won't talk any more about it," said his mother. "Your chief duty in life just now is to go to school. I am sorry you do not like it. But you must learn to do your duty whether you like it or not. So run along now, else you will be late."

The boy drew his cap down onto his head with a gesture of impatience, and turned to leave the room. As he turned a wave of anguish swept over his face. In a moment more he had slammed the front door and was on his way to the dreaded schoolroom. "I don't know what is the matter with Roger," said the mother, turning to me. "He is such a good-natured boy usually. I never heard him speak so before. Something must be going wrong with him."

"Perhaps the something wrong is with the teacher," I suggested, for I knew the shy, sensitive boy well and dearly loved him. The mother still looked perplexed and walked instinctively to the window as if to get a solution of the trouble by watching the fast receding form of her son.

We were silent. Then I said, "I have nothing special to do this afternoon. How would it do for me to go up to the school and look over the ground?" "I wish you would," she replied. "I would go with you if I did not have an important engagement for the afternoon."

Inside of half an hour I opened the schoolroom door. Being an entire stranger to the teacher, I merely nodded and sat down in the visitor's chair. My boy friend blushed, looked uncomfortable and fastened his eyes on the page of his open book. He was, as I have said, a shy, sensitive boy, and I surmised that he feared my visit might in some way make him conspicuous. But I was on my guard and merely glanced at him as I did at the rest of the fifty children who were crowded into the hot, ill-ventilated room. The class which was reciting resumed its work. The lesson was

finished and the pupils were sent to their seats to copy something from the blackboard. Then a lesson in oral spelling was begun with the class to which my boy belonged. The color came and went in his delicate face. I knew a trial was coming and that it would be all the harder because I was there. I tried to smile encouragingly for a moment and then to look in another direction. My hasty glance toward him, however, showed me that the boy was half sick with dread. The teacher was a bright, wide-awake young woman with lots of "go" in her. In a quick, alert voice she said, "Come now! All books put away. We'll see who can remember yesterday's lesson! Let's be quick!" and she began giving out some words from a slip of paper which she held in her hand. Each child rose promptly and stood beside his desk as he spelled the word given him. The work progressed briskly until it came to my boy.

The next word on her list was pronounced quickly by the teacher. Roger looked at her, turned red in the face, then slowly disentangling his long legs from the iron rod under the seat, he managed to get into the aisle holding tenaciously to his desk with the grip of a

drowning man, and, covered with confusion, spelled the word.

"Well! children! Look at Roger! He has *actually* found that there are some feet at the end of his legs! He is standing on them! Really, Roger, I congratulate you, that you didn't try to spell sitting down to-day!" The other boys grinned. The little girls tittered. And Roger—poor Roger—stung by her thoughtless sarcasm and realizing that he was an object of ridicule to his comrades, dropped into his seat utterly wretched. There was no more concentrating for work that afternoon. He paid no further attention to what was going on, but looked hopelessly out of the window as a prisoner might have looked through the iron bars of his cell. When it was again his turn to spell he merely shook his head and the word was passed on to the next child. The lesson ended, the class was told to take out its drawing material and complete the sketch begun the day before. Roger was passionately fond of drawing, and was at work with his pencil half his time at home. But his hand moved listlessly over the paper now. Occasionally it stopped entirely. He was so unhappy that he *could not* work, even

at his beloved sketching. Several times he looked up longingly at the clock to see if his torture for that day was not over. Once or twice he chanced to meet the eye of some other child. Each time he blushed furiously and a flash of pain darted over his face. Once or twice he wiped his brow in a weary, discouraged way. The brisk young teacher, apparently blind to the boy's condition, walked up this aisle and down that, speaking cheerily, and in that pleasant tone of voice which young teachers think they must use.

Once or twice she tried to converse with me. But I answered in monosyllables. I, too, was watching the slow-crawling hand of that old clock. Why wouldn't it mark half-past three, so that my boy could go and I could free my mind? I knew she was young. I knew she was inexperienced. I knew she did not realize what she had done. Had she struck Roger in the presence of all the children I could have forgiven her more easily. I understood now what George Eliot meant when she said, "Blows are but sarcasms turned stupid." My dear, sensitive, shy Roger! Every inch of him a gentleman! No wonder that he *hated* her and *hated* his school life. I almost hated her myself.

I recalled Froebel's words, "Ask every true school-child with what feeling he approached the schoolhouse, and still more with what feeling he entered it; how he felt more or less keenly each day as if he had entered into a higher spiritual world—the faith and trust with which the child enters school accomplishes everything." Then I found my wrath beginning to change into pity for the young teacher who had not yet learned that her vocation was one the divinest on earth; who still thought that keeping order, and teaching text-books were her chief duties! Poor thing! She was in the midst of a soul-garden and did not know it! Life was offering her some of its richest, rarest joys, its greatest opportunities, and she saw them not! Therefore, by the time school session had come to its close I was in a softened mood toward her. I nodded to Roger to go on home without me. I wanted to talk to her.

When we were alone, she moved about cheerfully picking up the debris which a day's work inevitably leaves behind it. Soon she said, "Are you interested in any of the children here." "I am interested in all children," I replied. "Are you a teacher?" She asked.

(At least she recognizes that this is the sentiment which a teacher should express.) "Yes," I answered, "I have taught twenty years. It is a glorious work, isn't it? It grows more glorious each year, doesn't it?" I purposely spoke as I did. I wanted to awaken her. She looked at me a little curiously, and then said, "Oh, I don't know. Sometimes I get very tired." I liked her frankness. It rung true. I at least would not have wounded vanity and deceit to deal with.

"Yes, I know," I replied. "We all get tired sometimes. You were tired to-day." Her eyes opened with alarm. "How did you know that?" she exclaimed, then added anxiously, "Did my work show fatigue?" "No," I answered, rising instinctively and going close enough to take one of her hands in mine. "Your face shows me that you have a best self, and I knew you could not be your best self when you needlessly caused a child to suffer acute anguish!" "What do you mean?" she cried. Then we sat down together and I told her of the scene in Roger's home, of the cause of my visit, and of the suffering which her thoughtless words had brought to a delicate, sensitive, misunderstood child. Before we

had finished the tears were rolling down her cheeks; and both her hands were holding mine as she said, "Oh, I thank you, I thank you so much for telling me all this. I did not mean to hurt the boy. I do want to do the right thing by all my children! Oh, I shall never again call a child stupid. How could I have been so blind! So cruel!" I saw that she had the right kind of stuff in her, and, with a few words of encouragement, I left. A week or two after that I called at the school again, and somehow it seemed to me that the young teacher's face had taken on some new and beautiful lines. Anyhow, Roger looked up with a pleased smile, and I thought, "One less unhappy child in the world, thank God!"

LITTLE MARY.

It happened in broad daylight, in a city park, with scores of people passing to and fro—yet only I and the one little child knew what took place. There were three women in the group and about ten or twelve children. The latter varied in age from two boys of twelve or thirteen on down, through several girls of nine and ten and boys of six and eight, to one wee four-year-old girl. Their baskets and boxes and glass jars filled with potato salad, milk, cold coffee and like delectables told the casual observer that they were out for a picnic supper in the park, while the sympathetic observer knew that here were three mothers wise enough to plan for and share in their children's holiday larks. One knew from the joy on the children's faces that there had been elaborate planning of the day, and the glee of packing the baskets and distributing the parcels and deciding who was careful enough to be trusted with the jar of milk and who should carry the tin coffee-pot (the choicest and most honorable part of the outfit, as

could easily be seen from the air of importance of the boy who triumphantly swung it along). There would be ravenous appetites by six o'clock, so there was a goodly supply of baskets, pails, boxes, etc. They had seated themselves on the steps of the Museum to rest a bit when the child tragedy I am about to describe took place.

It was the little four-year-old girl who was the heroine of this every-day drama of misunderstood childhood. Her older brother had seated himself on the steps above the rest of the group. He was the one hero in all the world to her, most to be admired and imitated. She was seated next to her mother, but her eyes traveled longingly up to the more exalted seat occupied by her big brother. Her mother's attention was obscured by some conversation with one of the other women. The child looked longingly up to where her brother was exultingly tossing his arms to and fro in the mad ecstasy of freedom. Then she looked at her mother and began: "Mamma, Mamma, Mamma, I'm going up to where Brother is."

The mother paid no attention to the utterance of aspiration on the part of her daughter, although each time that the word "Mamma"

was drawled out it was accompanied by a yanking of the mother's dress. There was a pause on the part of the child, indicating, if I read her face aright, a few moments of indecision. Should she obey the law, or should she assert her freedom?

Then the brother from the vantage ground above began kicking his legs out into the air in added token of the delights of superior freedom. This was too much; the four-year-old prisoner began pulling again at the invisible ball and chain that held her to her mother's side, and again came the drawling protest, now a little fretful: "Mamma, Mamma, Mamma, I'm going up where Brother is."

This time the mother turned her head long enough to say: "No, sit still," and then she turned again to the interesting conversation with her neighbors.

The child sat still for a minute or two, and then there slowly crept over her face a look of determination. The battle between liberty and authority had been fought and personal freedom had won. No matter what the risk might be, she had made up her mind that she was going to find out how it felt to sit away high up, above all the people, and to toss out her arms

and kick out her legs just as Brother was doing. She knew it was wrong, dreadfully wrong. Her look of fear as she glanced up toward her mother's face showed that. But an exultant shout from Brother above banished all doubt as to the desirability of the deed she was contemplating. The one remaining question was how to do it.

She began slowly and softly edging away from her mother, while her face flushed guiltily. Her eyes never once left their furtive watch of her mother, and it was well for the success of her plans that she was on her guard, for she had not slipped more than three inches away before the mother's hand reached out to her and caught hold of her dress, while the mother's voice said: "Sit still, Mary!" though she did not turn her head toward the child. She was talking with her friend, and did not wish to be interrupted, but the autocratic manner in which she reached out her hand and physically restrained the restless little one, as well as the mechanical way in which she said: "Sit still, Mary," spoke volumes to me of past restraints and disregard of childish longings. It told me that a hundred times before she had said: "No, sit still, Mary," and little Mary's

conduct proved that she understood the situation, and had many a time before won her own way by strategy when she could not win it by fair play.

She sat motionless until her mother's hand relaxed its hold on her dress. But no cat ever watched more intently the hole in the floor from which the rat was expected to emerge than Mary watched for the relaxing of the mother's hold. It came in a few minutes, as the child knew it would come. Then she quietly slipped the folds of her skirt from the forgetting fingers and edged another inch away. The guilty look on her face showed that she had now consciously begun her downward career of disobedience to authority. She did not now look at Brother—her whole mind was absorbed in escaping from her mother, or, to put it a little more comprehensively, escaping from an intolerable condition of bondage. She paused, then came another inch of space between her and her mother, and an equal widening of the breach of that inner world which cannot be measured by inches; for an expression of defiance now began to show itself. She had dared to resist authority; now she was losing her respect for it. The

space soon widened into a foot or more. Still she unconsciously held on to the edge of the step. The child waited a few seconds, then silently and slyly placed her hands on the step above and lifted her body up to it without actually rising to her feet. A flash of triumph on her face showed that she had discovered the right method of escape. She looked quickly around to the right and left to be sure that nobody was watching her. Then by the same subtle movement she lifted herself to the next step. All this was done silently, with many furtive glances at the mother, yet with an air of exultant, almost revengeful, triumph which told the student of child-life that her conscience was crying out: "It's wrong, it's wrong, it's wrong," while every other atom of her being was answering: "I don't care; I'm going to do it." She soon reached the longed-for place of exaltation. She was now on the same step with her brother, but about ten feet away from where he sat. He was looking the other way. The mother was still unconscious of her daughter's rebellion and escape. The other children were occupied in various ways. She had not been missed by any of them.

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The loneliness of her new position suddenly overcame her (as it has many older sisters of her race who have defied the family authority and insisted in climbing as high as their brothers had climbed). The daring was gone now. The gleam of defiance faded out of her face. She coyly slid along until she was near enough to her brother to nestle down close beside him. Then her whole attitude changed; she at once became distinctly feminine, the old-fashioned feminine at that. She caressingly put her little hand coaxingly against her brother's cheek. No word could have said more plainly: "I am cold and lonely. Brother, dear, open your arms and give me shelter." But what did the brother do? He instantly joined the vast army of misunderstanders and rudely pushed her away. He then rose in his manly dignity and appealed to the only court of law that either of them knew anything about. He shouted out: "Mamma, Mary has come up here!"

The child's lip trembled, and her eyes filled with tears. She had so hoped he would appreciate her hard-won battle and take her in as sharer of his freedom. It was a moment of despair.

Then the shout was repeated: "Mamma, Mary has come up here."

This time it had an indignant ring in it, and the mother turned her head. "Mary," she called, "come here this minute!"

Mary rose, turned her back and rapidly mounted to the topmost step. The fight was on now, and she might as well go as far as possible. She was a fugitive fleeing from justice. The mother rose angrily and started up the steps. The child gave one look back over her shoulder and fled through the open door of the Museum, into the arms of a big, gruff-voiced man in blue uniform and brass buttons. Polyphemus embodied no more the brute force of a giant to poor Ulysses crouching in the darkened cave than did this rough, unknown shape terrify the frightened child. She was altogether too much excited to detect the kindly humor under his loud words: "Here! here! You little runaway! What are you doing in here!" He grabbed her up and brought her back to her mother, who had now reached the top step, panting and out of breath.

The child's face was pale with fright. No words escaped her lips, but she looked plead-

ingly, helplessly up into her mother's face. The hour of repentance and reconciliation had come. The awful escape from that dark room and the terrible giant had quenched the last flickering flame of independence. It seemed to me that a heart of stone would have felt the child's anguish. But the mother was angry. Besides, the neighbors had witnessed it all. What could be harder to bear? She saw not the white face turned mutely toward her, nor did she notice the trembling of the little body, terrified with fright. She seized the child by one arm, and, giving her a hard shaking, she dragged her down the stone steps, adding to the humiliation of the scene by saying loud enough for whoever would to hear: "You are a bad, naughty girl! I wish I had left you at home! You shall not come with us to the park any more." Yet she was apparently a good woman, with a kindly expression of face in general—but how could she stand having her neighbors see her four-year-old child defy her?

In the meantime the scene had focused upon the culprit the eyes of the entire world (the people on the steps were the entire world to the child just at that moment). Then, to add

to the torture of the moment, her brother, whom five minutes before she had fondly tried to caress, now openly jeered at her, and the other children tittered! The sensitive face hardened. If she were denounced by her own family as a criminal she would be a criminal. By the time they had reached the picnic group at the foot of the steps she was sullen and silent. So when her mother picked her up and sat her down, somewhat emphatically, in the very spot from which she had made her escape, not a muscle in her face moved. She might have been made of wood or stone, so entirely devoid was she of any trace of emotion.

"There, now, you sit there!" commanded the mother, as she smoothed down her dress—a gesture which I have observed when women are smoothing down their tempers. Then, turning to her neighbors, she took up again the interesting conversation which had been interrupted.

The child sat motionless for a short time. Then she deliberately rose, her small body involuntarily straightened itself to its full height, her lips pressed together, and her hands doubled into small, defiant fists. She no longer

looked at her mother or, for that matter, at any one else. She had been publicly disgraced—what cared she for public opinion now? Carrying her body as a daughter of the Pharaohs might have borne herself, she deliberately ascended the steps to the very top without once looking around. Reaching once more the topmost step, she relaxed somewhat and stood there as if expecting some awful doom.

The mother was seemingly unconscious of her absence, but the lynx-eyed brother bawled out: "Mamma, Mary has gone up to the top again." The mother gave no heed, but the child at the top of the steps did. Casting one look of scorn upon the tale-bearer, she walked across the broad landing and out on to the high parapet which rose perpendicularly twelve feet above the ground. At this the brother fairly shrieked to his mother: "Mamma, Mamma, look at Mary!"

All eyes turned once more upon the child, who stood boldly outlined against the blue sky. When she saw that she had gained the attention of her scornful public she deliberately stood on one leg and hopped up and down, coming nearer and nearer to the edge of the

parapet. She was openly defying that public in reckless disregard of what the consequence might be to her. Ah! how many outcast sisters had done the same before. The mother, with a cry of real alarm, sprang up the steps and rushed out on to the parapet.

There was no mute appeal on the child's face now. She had shown her disregard of both public and family condemnation, and was willing to take the consequences. She stood calmly awaiting arrest, her eyes twinkling with satisfaction over the disturbance she had created. So when her mother again shook her and called her a troublesome, naughty girl she merely laughed a hard little laugh, and let herself be once more dragged down the steps. At this juncture one of the women proposed that the party should move on. Baskets and boxes, hats and wraps were gathered up and the group passed out of sight, the first mother holding the four-year-old firmly by the hand.

But the child's face did not change its look of defiant amusement.

And so we go on, making and marring the "God-image" in the young children intrusted to our care.

THE TWINS.

"No, I never allow fairy tales to be read to my children. I do not believe in such nonsense. There are plenty of common-sense *facts* to be taught children. There is no need whatever of wasting their time on imaginary things. I simply will not allow it."

The last words were utered with an icy precision as she drew her handsome wrap a trifle closer around her well-shaped shoulders and settled herself back in her chair on the hotel veranda. It was evidently the case of an immovable conviction against which an irresistible argument could battle forever in vain. I looked from the cold face of this elegently attired, self-satisfied woman to the colorless but very proper twins who sat on the hotel veranda steps instead of on chairs, while they watched the other children dig in the sand or sail mimic boats or run up and down the beach, bare-headed and bare-legged, shouting for the sheer joy of shouting.

I had watched the life of the twins every day for a week. They came into the dining

room, always walking demurely beside their English governess, who was just a little primmer and stiffer than they. She was forty and they were but ten years old. Their flaxen hair was always parted and scrupulously brushed flat to their heads and plaited in two stiff, hard, little plaits, tied with narrow black ribbon. Their blue gingham dresses were made from the same pattern and as simply as was possible, and always starched and clean, painfully clean. Even their heavy, heelless shoes were exactly alike. When they stood with their backs to you it was impossible to tell which was Anna and which was Harriet. When you viewed their profiles you discovered that Anna's nose was somewhat sharper than that of her sister. They had been trained to speak with exceeding correctness and their voices were as lifeless as are the mechanical voices one hears from a good phonograph. So far as I had followed it, their conversation consisted of "Yes, Miss Myrten," or "Yes, Mamma," or "Miss Myrten, may I have another glass of milk," or "Miss Myrten, may I walk off the gravel?" or some similar commonplace, until I had begun to doubt whether or not they had any inner souls. They had

seemingly never had any provocation to deepen or raise the pitch of their voices or to intensify the tone. Little did I dream of their dramatic power that was soon to be revealed to me!

Each morning, when the rest of the children started for their surf bath, they had their lesson in English history with their governess. Not that their physical well-being was not looked after. Oh, no! Each afternoon, when the bathhouses were deserted, they were taken down to the beach by Miss Myrten for a bath, being allowed to remain in the warm sea water just nine minutes by her watch, which she held in her hand from the time they stepped out of the bathhouse to the minute when in calm, unruffled, but not-to-be-disobeyed tones she called out, "Come, Anna, the time is up." Sometimes Harriet took a longing look at the slow rolling of an oncoming wave, but Anna always stepped out of the water in instant obedience to the call, as if the sea and air meant no more to her than did the English history or the botany lessons. I forgot to state that their regular afternoon tramp of a mile and a half was always accompanied by a botany lesson as lifeless and as devoid

of interest as was the face of the governess. They were laboriously compiling an herbarium of the plants of the neighborhood and committing to memory the names of each of the plants they pressed, dried and mounted. A revelation was to come, but not yet.

One Sunday afternoon when a group of children gathered around an enterprising boy who was performing what to them was a wonderful trick of balancing one nail on the head of another nail, Harriet's face brightened a bit. "Mamma," she said, turning to her mother, "is it wrong to balance one nail on another on Sunday?" The mother merely answered without looking up, "I am reading now, Harriet. You must not interrupt me with questions?" Anna frowned a scarcely perceptible frown. The two exchanged looks, but decided to be on the safe side as to Sunday amusements. So Harriet subsided, smoothed out the slightly disarranged skirt of her gingham dress and dropped her hands idly into her lap, and they returned to their motionless watching of the other children as each took turn in trying to make the one nail rest in a horizontal position on the head of the other.

All clapped their hands and shouted with childish delight at the end of each experiment, whether it succeeded or failed. For was it not the effort they enjoyed rather than the result? The twins did not stir from the upper step on which they were seated, but their eyes followed admiringly the movements of the group below. Once Anna glanced up at their mother. Was there a gleam of resentment in her eye? It could not have been! I must have been mistaken, for the next instant she was gazing at the sea with the usual expression of ennui on her face, as if nothing in life mattered much. "You poor, lifeless, little creatures," I thought, as I turned back to my book again.

The next day was one of those dreary days of leaden sky and leaden sea, with the atmosphere between so saturated with fog that it too weighed with leaden-like depression upon one's spirits. All the men had gone off fishing and the women had retired to their rooms to write letters or read light novels. The children alone retained their life and vitality. A group of them took possession of the veranda just outside of my window. The hotel-keeper's nine-year-old daughter was evidently the

leader. "Let's play house," she exclaimed. "Now, I'll be hotel-keeper and you and Harris (aged eight and two, respectively), must go round the corner there, and that's your house." "Now, Annie, you and Sara must be my hired help and we'll be getting the hotel ready for summer boarders." All joined in eagerly and then followed the overturning of veranda chairs to make hotel rooms, halls, office and dining room. One or two more children, attracted by the noise and hustle, joined the group and were appointed to their role of summer boarders or hired help as seemed best to the self-appointed leader. (For that matter are not all leaders among children self-appointed?) "Now you must write, and then you must telegraph to know if I can let you have a room." This to the eight-year-old whose head was inquisitively protruding from around the corner. "Dear, me! I must go to town for some soap! Some people are *so fussy* about their soap." Her assumed tone of vexation told volumes of the petty annoyances to which the eccentricities of city boarders had put her maternal relative. The new arrivals began to appear and were hustlingly shown to their rooms, and left there with the

parting injunction, "Ring for the maid if you need anything." Then another child would be hastily pressed into role of maid.

"Ting-a-ling, ling," called the eight-year-old from over the walls of her upturned chair. "Bring me a pitcher of hot water," she said with haughty air to the new maid. "I wish to give my child a baarth." This was said with a clever mimicry of the drawl of some fine ladies. "Has the baarthtub been washed out?" she drawled again. "Yes, marm." "Are there plenty of towels?" "Yes, marm," mumbled the maid, assuming at once an expression of hopeless dullness. "Ve'y well," drawled the fine lady. "You may clean up my room while I am out." At this, up bobbed the young mistress of the hostelry. "The maid has to take care of the parlor and halls," she exclaimed, in a voice of severe reproof. "She cannot wait on you." All the child's New England ancestry rebelled, even in play, against this snobbery. The imperious guest subsided. "Oh, well, then," in a conciliatory tone, "I will get some warm water out of this faucet." Then, with wifely superiority, just tinged with irritability, she turned her head, so to speak, over her shoulder, to an in-

visible husband, "My dear, *will* you shut that door! I cannot give the baby his baarth in a draught!" After this there followed the imaginary washing of the face of the two-year-old. "There! Now you have had a nice fresh baarth. You must lie down until dinner time. Dear! dear! I am so dusty!" From the scrupulous brushing and shaking of skirts that followed, I surmised an overly clean, nervous mamma was her type of ideal womanhood. Going to the edge of the overturned chair (the supposed door of her room), she called out in a querulous tone, "Is dinner ready?" "No," shortly answered the landlady from the space formed by the next overturned chair. "We have dinner at *twelve* o'clock in this house!" Then, in an entire change of tone, "Dear! dear! dear! I forgot the crackers for dinner! Here, Sallie, you run down to the store and get some quick!"

The tribulations of hotel-keeping proceeded. "Madam," called out the discontented city boarder, will you have one of the maids bring a cup of cocoa to my room? I *must* feed my baby."

All her thoughts seemed to center around her baby. The little two-year-old was made

to sit up, to play drinking the cocoa, was taken out for a walk, was given another "baarth," and was, much against his will, made to lie down again "to rest a little after dinner."

In the meantime the landlady was bustling about, rearranging the rooms (improvised from more chairs dragged from another part of the veranda), dusting and sweeping with imaginary brush and broom, ejaculating, partly to herself, partly to the maid who acted out her role of slow-witted hired help, by listlessly following her about: "Dear me! I do hope some more people will come! We must have all the rooms ready for them."

And so the play progressed, reproducing the somewhat uneventful life of a respectable seaside hotel on the New England coast, the petty cares of the landlady, clashing now and then with the petty exactions of the city boarders.

Suddenly the twins appeared. For a moment they stood mute and demure, looking with their usual stolid stare upon the scene. Then Anna stepped to the front. "Oh," she exclaimed, her voice quivering with excitement, "Let's play that we've come to the hotel, too! And let's play a robber comes to the hotel and steals our child!" "Here, Antony,"

she cried, seizing an eight-year-old boy in Little Lord Fauntleroy finery, "You can be the robber." "Oh, yes," cried Harriet, her eyes shining with the excitement of the occasion, "Let's play he chloroforms us! Then steals our child!" The leadership had changed so suddenly from the landlady's practical daughter to the twins that the rest of the children stood open-mouthed, gazing in dismayed astonishment at the change in the nature of the pastime.

"Yes," cried Anna, as she pushed first one child and then another into their prospective bedrooms, "Now we will all lie down and pretend to be asleep. And Antony, you must c-r-a-w-l in at the window and chloroform all of us and then steal our jewels and run away with our baby." "Oh!" interrupted Harriet, "let's have him cut all our throats and the policemen come next morning and find us all dead!" "No," said Anna, decisively, "Some of us must live so as to testify in the court that the jewels are ours. I'll tell you what we'll do. He can cut your throat and chloroform me and then the landlady can wake up the next morning and see the blood trickling from under the door—and come and bang on our

door, and of course it will be locked. And then the police can break it open and find you dead and me chloroformed, and the window open and the baby gone!" The rapidity with which the thrilling scene was planned, the exultation with which she threw out her arms at the close, showed that it was an old and beloved plot in her mind.

I glanced at the other children. They had partly risen from their prostrate positions and sat or crouched in various attitudes, drinking in the horror and the daring of the proposed drama. "Oh, yes," cried Harriet, in ecstacy of delight. "And let's play that you offered a thousand dollars reward for the child! And let's play the police found the murderer's bloody tracks on the grass. And—" Here she caught her breath, the scene was so real to her— "let's play that they followed the blood-stained footprints to a cave! And there they found him crouching in a dark corner with a bowie-knife in his hand! And let's play—" "Harriet," called the voice of Miss Myrten, "it is time for you and Anna to come in for your lessons."

I sighed—but what could *I* do?

FOR FATHER'S AMUSEMENT.

I was strolling through a neighboring park one breezy September day when it occurred. It took less than ten minutes from beginning to end—but did it *end* then?

There had been a shower the night before, and the city's dust had been washed from the air and from leaves on trees and shrubbery. All nature seemed in fine mood and had filled me, along with the rest of the town-imprisoned mortals, with some of her exuberance and life.

This keen enjoyment of mere existence, which nature alone can give, was particularly noticeable in the bouyant movements of a little three-year-old child, who was dancing in and out the shadows of the tall trees, now running, now skipping, now jumping in the joyous exhilaration of mere animal life. Ever and anon he looked back at his father and his father's friend, who were strolling along in a more sedate enjoyment of the fresh air and glittering sunshine. The fact that each of them carried a tennis racket showed that they, too, were out for a holiday.

The child's delight in all the freshness and freedom about him quickened his senses, as it always will quicken a healthy child. In a few moments his attention was attracted by the bending, swaying branches of a nearby clump of willow trees. The fascination of the lithe, graceful movement of the boughs was so strong that he stopped and stood with upturned face, gazing at them until the two men approached him. Then catching hold of his father's hand he exclaimed, "See! see!" pointing to the nodding tree branches. His face was full of happiness, and his eyes were looking into his father's eyes expecting sympathy in this new-found wonder of nature. But the father gave no heed to what was interesting the boy. Instead, he began playfully slapping him on his skirts with the tennis racket, at the same time saying, "Will you be good?" "Will you be good?" "No," answered the child in high glee. It was evidently a familiar pastime between them. "Will you be good?" repeated the father, in mock threat lifting the tennis racket as if to strike the child over the head. "No, I won't! No, I won't!" shouted the boy as he scampered off over the grass. This created a chase in which the father play-

fully spanked the captured boy as with make-believe wrath he dragged him back to the side-walk. Having returned to the starting point of the chase he released the boy with the words, "There, now, I'll spank you hard if you are not a good boy!" He had scarcely let go his hold on the youngster's arm before the latter again ran off, shouting in high glee, "No, I won't! No, I won't be good!" Again came the chase and again the playful spanking and dragging back and the release with an admonition that he would get a beating this time if he was not a good boy. The tone in which the words were said were an invitation to the child to renew the game.

The third time he started off, however, the other man decided that he, too, would take part in the sport. So he quickly put his tennis racket in front of the boy, thus obstructing his path. The child manfully struggled to push it aside, but could not. Soon his "No, I won't" in answer to his father's "Will you be good?" had in it a note of fretfulness, or, rather, of resentment. He was contending now with two grown men and his strength was not equal to the strain. He pushed angrily against the racket in front while trying at the same time

to avoid the light blows from the one in the rear. With cat-like agility the man in front would withdraw his obstructing tennis racket until the boy started forward and then check—would come the racket just in front of him. The very movement of his arm was like that of a cat regaining his hold on an escaping mouse. A peal of laughter from him each time he caught the exasperated child showed how much he was enjoying the sport. The father seemed equally amused and joined heartily in thwarting the efforts of the boy to escape. The little fellow's face grew red and he was soon short of breath from his struggles, and there was the angry sob of defeat in his voice. The scene ended by the child's getting into a towering rage.

When they passed out of sight the father had seized him by the arm and was forcing him along, the boy kicking and struggling, but powerless to help himself. The two men were laughing heartily.

The child's blood had been poisoned by the heat of anger, he had exhausted his physical vitality and his nervous system had been disarranged, not to speak of his moral standards—but then, the father and his friend had been amused.

A SUNDAY MORNING DIVERSION.

It was a warm Sunday morning in June. Having had a taxing day of work the day before, I sat idly gazing at the rather unattractive rear view of some three-story flats not more than a hundred feet away. They were flats that rented for "moderate" sums, and consequently were small, with little out-of-door air or sunshine. They presented a monotonous row of narrow back balconies. Each enclosed by a wooden railing and with a steep, iron stairway that, curving a little to break the steepness, led down to the balcony below, and from that to the smooth concrete pavement of what might be called, out of courtesy, their back yards.

The scene was not unlike thousands of similar rear views in any large city. My eyes wandered listlessly over the dreary picture, and then came the thought, "What a place in which to bring up a child!" It was the old inner protest that I so often found myself making against the imprisonment of children in the congested parts of great cities, and yet

—"What are working people to do?" "They have to live near their work!" was the usual reply when my inner protest voiced itself in words.

This time, being alone, I did not utter my protest, but began instinctively looking for signs of child-life. There they were, sure enough. An old chair turned on its side had been placed on one upper balcony across the opening made for the iron stairway. Of course, it was put there to keep some child from tumbling downstairs and breaking his collar bone, or, possibly, his neck. Still it was a prison door, which prevented the aspiring young explorer from exerting his God-given right of investigating the world around him, of mastering its obstacles and discovering its laws. I wondered if his mother realized this? I wondered if she gave him the partial compensation of going to the market with her? I wondered if she ever took him to the park for an afternoon's holiday?

Ah! there they are now! The kitchen door had opened and a rather good-looking woman with her hair still in curl papers and wearing a flowered dressing-sacque, came out onto the small porch, followed by a three-year-old

boy, dressed in spotless white, with a modish black patent leather belt, short socks and patent leather slippers.

I had them catalogued before the mother went in and shut the door. She was a young wife, with the bridal days still near enough not to have lost the desire of looking pleasing in the eyes of her husband. The flowered dressing-sacque and hair in curl papers showed that. (Why do women ever grow careless as to their morning attire? It is one of the priceless gifts they can give to their husbands. A frowzy, dirty-looking woman is enough to take away any man's appetite.) And the boy—he was, in all probability, their first child. Women who live in small, stuffy flats and do all their own housework rarely ever dress a second or third child in spotless white garments with the latest fashionable addition to the costume.

I had only a moment in which to ponder over the form of mother love that spent money for a child's clothes and scrimped on air and sunshine. It is such a common mistake that one soon learns to expect it.

The boy soon engaged my attention—he was too bright and active a little fellow to stand

still long, even if the sunshine was pouring down its glad light upon him. Perhaps that helped to stir the life within him. It does this in plants, why not in human beings. He raced up and down the ten by five-foot balcony several times. Then he worked at the upturned chair which held the gateway to the outside world. Finding that he could not loosen it, however, he soon gave up the effort, good-naturedly enough. It was evidently an old experience of his. Then he began climbing up onto the lower horizontal board of the railing that enclosed the little porch. This enabled him to look down to the cement pavement and the alley beyond. He gazed at this larger world for a short time. But normal children are not so constituted that they can be mere spectators. They need to be *doing* something, to be exercising some power within by using it. So he climbed down and up again, until he had mastered that feat. Then he looked around for some new activity. A tin can stood on the upper railing. He reached for it, held it suspended in the air for a moment, then let it drop and from his mounted position leaned far over the balcony and watched it whirl and whiz through the

air, until with a loud clattering noise, it struck the pavement below. Haven't you had the same instinctive impulse to play thus with the law of gravity by dropping a stone from some high place from which you were looking down to some unmeasured depth below? If so, you will understand what followed. You and I are accustomed to the sensation of seeing objects fall from high places. We know why they do it, and yet we still throw rocks down echoing cañons, bits of wood or paper from high bridges. To the boy this was a new and stimulating experience. He danced up and down in glee over it. Then, naturally enough, he wanted to repeat the experiment. He looked around. A broom stood in the corner. He tried to handle that, but it was too much for him. He next stooped over a wooden box to examine the possibilities that it might contain. In a moment more he had climbed onto the lower railing again and was holding high above his head a bottle of beer. Then it went whirling down through space. With a crash of glass and a sputter of beer, it subsided in the concrete below. The little fellow was wild with excitement. The shattered glass glistened and gleamed. The beer

foamed a little from the severe shaking it had received. He leaned farther over the railing and gazed with delight upon the work which his hands had wrought. Then he shouted for joy. Of course, such an exciting experience as this must be repeated. Ask any scientist if he would not reproduce, if he could, any new and hitherto unknown phenomenon, which had by accident presented itself to him in his laboratory work.

It took but a minute of time to climb down, get another of the beer bottles and send it hurling down, down, down to the concrete pavement below. Then a third bottle was sent after the other two; then a fourth; then a fifth; then a sixth.

The game was getting exciting. I found myself leaning forward eagerly anticipating the next and the next. A thrill of the danger of the after consequences intensified my interest. But no thought of possible punishment was in his mind. He was filled with pure, unadulterated delight. Evidently he had never been allowed to lower an empty spool tied to a string down to the mysterious depths below and then draw it up again at his own sweet pleasure. Apparently this was his first

experience in playing with the distance between him and the earth; his first feeling of power over space! A child instinctively loves to transform the appearance of things. It matters little to him whether the transformation is destructive or constructive. It is the feeling that he has power to change things that craves satisfaction in outer demonstration. This is why children, when let alone, so often destroy their manufactured toys. Wise is the mother, indeed, who furnishes her child with playthings which can easily be taken to pieces and put together again. Wiser still is the mother who supplies toys which can be transformed into new shapes without injury.

But let us come back to our boy. Neither he nor I had time just now for soliloquy or contemplation. The seventh bottle followed the sixth. The eighth quickly followed the seventh. The boy's white skirts fairly switched as he whirled from the beer-case to the railing and from the railing to the beer-case. His excitement was contagious. Would he get the last bottle before a halt was called? was the thought that was uppermost in my mind. Perhaps I ought to have thought of the wasted beer, but I didn't. Why hadn't he been taught

the right use of high places? He was merely finding out for himself that which ought to have been taught him long ago. The ninth—tenth—and eleventh bottled followed in quick succession, until at last the twelve bottles lay in a shattered heap at the foot of the stairs, and the boy, flushed with success, leaned farther still over the railing in order that he might get a better view of what he had accomplished. Possibly a dim foreboding of the great law of gravity was stirring the ancestral subconsciousness within him. Perhaps it was the mere joy of doing something that caused him to clap his hands and fairly crow with delight.

Just at this juncture the mother opened the kitchen door and saw how her child, left to his own resources, had entertained himself. He turned his face toward her and pointing down below called, "Come see!" But she had already seen—from her standpoint—and evidently she did not stop to consider his standpoint. She sprang forward, seized him by the arm and exclaimed in a loud, angry voice, Oh, you wretch! What will your father say!"

A look of bewildered astonishment came on

the boy's face. What had he done? He had merely been amusing himself by testing the velocity of falling bodies and the fragile nature of glass. But there was no time for explanations. He would not have been able to have told her why he had done what he had done if she had given him a chance. As it was, she dragged him into the apartment, slammed the door with a bang, and then soon I heard the long, loud wail of a child's voice, as if in physical pain.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON.

Beta was a dreamy child, one of those children who seem to live in a world of their own, regardless of the commonplace, everyday things that are going on around them. Her large, dark eyes had a far-away look in them, as if they were seeing all sorts of things that you did not see, and oftentimes her answer to your question or her assent to your plans was given in such a way that you were dead sure she hadn't heard a word you had been saying.

Her brothers were wont to tease her by telling her that she had been "wool-gathering." She didn't know just what "wool-gathering" meant, but the tone of derision in which they would say it made her feel that it was a terrible fault, to be hidden as much as possible, and of which she ought to be thoroughly ashamed, so she generally answered their accusation with, "I wasn't either, I was just thinking!" This usually brought a shout of laughter on their part, and the deeper accusation, "You couldn't tell to save your life what we were talking about!" And as she couldn't

she usually fled to her room for the refreshment of tears. Her gentle mother, who realized that she must learn the practical side of life also, had frequently begun with these words, "Now, my daughter, listen to what I am saying. It is not well bred to ask an older person to repeat a request." At such times Beta would try her best to forget about the glittering world of fairies and elves, or to stop thinking of how grand St. George must have looked as he galloped forward to kill the horrid dragon and rescue the beautiful princess, or whatever other world of wonderful things and heroic people she had been dreaming of and to remember just when mother wanted the baby to be fed, or just what the words were in the message that she was to take to Aunt Sallie on her way to school, for she adoringly admired her gentle mother. Yet she would have submitted to the torture of the rack before she would have revealed to this same beloved mother any of her glorious visions.

Although her mother was to a certain extent responsible for the dream world in which Beta lived, she was a woman of more than the average culture, and had taken refuge in

books, from the uncongenial surroundings of a small Western town. She was also a devoted mother, and therefore, had naturally enough drawn her children into her book-world. Beta's earliest recollections were of sitting on the floor at her mother's feet, while Aunt Sallie read Shakespeare aloud, as her mother's swift needle darted in and out of her sewing. Of course she did not understand it, but the majesty and rhythm of the blank verse fascinated her. Every Sunday afternoon since she could remember, the three boys and she had sat listening spell-bound to the mother's Bible stories. She seemed to have had a personal acquaintance, this mother of theirs, with all the old Hebrew prophets, and Beta never questioned her mother's close friendship with Moses and Daniel, her own two favorite Bible heroes.

(You see she did not have a very clear comprehension of historic perspective.) Then on week-day evenings they had the old Norse tales a thousand years or more old, tales of ice caves and giants and bloody battles, or the folk stories, gathered from six hundred years of myth-making of the Teutonic peoples. Sometimes it was the Aurthurean

legends, of which her brothers were most fond, but Beta herself loved dear Hans Andersen best of all, and often after going to bed at night she lay for a long time listening to the stories the moon had to tell, or she would imagine herself riding on the back of the north wind to unknown lands, or playing the part of some other hero or heroine of the dear old Dane. By the time she was eight years old Beta could read fairy tales for herself, and great was her joy when, on her last birthday, because she was eleven years old, her mother had given to her the volume of Homer's "Odyssey," which she herself had read when she was a girl of twelve. She had often told Beta how she had stood beside her mother and read aloud from it while her mother stitched and mended for a family of eleven. They were "Southern gentry," these forefathers of Beta, and had felt that they must have the "world-culture" which their ancestors had had, even if deprived of the leisure of that former time. So Beta's mother had read from Homer and Milton and Shakespeare to her mother when they lived on the old Kentucky farm. So you see Beta came legitimately into her love of the heroic and the beautiful, and

a rich world of romance and adventure it was, peopled with giants and genii, kings and queens, prophets and priests.

Of course she was very trying to her teacher, little Miss Simpson, who was honestly striving to earn her thirty-five dollars a month by having the children learn the text-books so thoroughly that they could answer every question on examination day. It had never entered the head of little Miss Simpson that education meant anything else than passing examinations, or that a teacher had other duties than to teach the contents of the text-book which the board of education had selected for that year. So don't blame her too severely for what happened one warm June day, when through the open window could be seen the soft white clouds drifting lazily over the blue sky and the droning hum of insects told plainly of the deliciousness of the out-of-door life. It had been hard all day for Miss Simpson to keep the attention of the children on their books, and now a geography lesson was in progress. The class were trying to bound the different countries of Europe, concerning which they knew but little and cared less. Miss Simpson had been compelled to

speak twice to Joe Freen about the disturbance he was making, and to rebuke Jerry Macman for catching flies. Annie Welsh had nodded sleepily and had let her book fall out of her hands, and now there sat Beta, staring at the map on the opposite side of the schoolroom instead of looking at the map in the geography as Miss Simpson had told all the class to do. Then, too, Beta's eyes were lighted with an expression of pleased surprise, so of course she couldn't be thinking of her geography lesson. Little Miss Simpson was tired and a wee bit nervous, and felt sure Beta would fail in her examination if she did not pay better attention to the bounding of the different countries of Europe. That question was sure to come in the examination. It did every year. So Miss Simpson felt it her duty to say, "Beta, what are you doing?" As I said, she was weary and her voice had just a little edge of annoyance in it. "I—" stammered Beta, "I was watching the Turks carry the litter of the princess to her father's palace." She had been reading in the Arabian Nights the evening before, and now was surprised out of her usual reticence. "You were doing what?" asked Miss Simpson in wide-eyed astonish-

ment. *She* had never heard of Arabian Nights, it was not in her normal school course. Beta was covered with confusion, for now all the school were staring at her, some of them with their mouths open, ready for the laugh that was sure to follow. She gave a swift glance toward the door, then into the faces of the children who were at their desks—she could not see the faces of her classmates. There was no help for it now, she *must* try to make them understand that she was not dreaming, she was only thinking of Constantinople and the beautiful church there, and the strange men with the baggy trousers that the moment before her imagination had pictured to her, so she hurried on, suffering acutely as she spoke, "I was looking at the map on the wall and hunting up Constantinople, and it all changed into a great city with minarets and tall towers and queer foreign men in Turkish trousers, and red fezes on their heads, and dogs following at their heels, and—and—" she hesitated, but stumbled on, "I thought I saw a beautiful princess being carried in a litter, a chair with curtains around it, you know"—she looked up helplessly at Miss Simpson—"don't you know the kind of a

chair they carried Scherara-Zade in when she went to marry the Sultan?" Miss Simpson looked blank.

"Don't you remember," pleaded Beta, still more confused by the hush that had fallen on the room, "the Sultan whose brother was king of Tartary?" Some boys giggled, Miss Simpson cut her short. "No, I don't remember; besides Tartary hasn't anything to do with bounding the countries of Europe. You would better stop your wool-gathering and pay attention to your lesson if you want to pass the examination." At this all the boys snickered, and some of the girls stuffed their handkerchiefs into their mouths. Beta struggled bravely to keep back the tears, and overwhelmed with shame, hung her head, nor did she once again lift it that afternoon. She had not meant to displease her teacher, nor had she known how wrong it was to call up the pictures of the people who lived in the countries one was studying about—you see she was a little mixed as to where the Sassanian Monarchy was located. But it must have been very wicked, else Miss Simpson would never have said she was "wool-gathering," before all the children! It was terrible! Too ter-

rible to bear, and she had to bite her lips hard to keep back the quick, hot tears.

That night, when alone in her little bedroom, with only the stars to listen (she didn't mind them, they were so near God, they must be kind), she poured forth her passionate grief, and kneeling beside her bed she sobbed:

"Oh, God, dear God, make me to be like other children." Then more pleading, "Oh, God, dear God, don't let me go wool-gathering any more! And *please,* dear, *dear* God, don't let me see princes and palaces and things where there is only a cracked wall with a map hanging on it. For Jesus' sake. Amen."

Then she rose. Somehow she felt as if the dear God would understand that she hadn't meant to do wrong, and that thought comforted her much.

THE SAND-PILE.

It was a warm summer afternoon and I, just recovering from a headache, sat listlessly at my window, too weary to attempt any work, too indolent to seek any amusement. My eyes drifted aimlessly over the familiar scene of an empty lot, and on beyond to a new house which had recently shut out my view of a busy thoroughfare.

I had been detained in the city that summer by some necessary work, and my soul was in a state of rebellion. I wanted the mountain-tops with their exhilarating air and ever-changing marvel of outline and color, varying each hour with every change in the atmosphere! I longed for that thrill of freedom which comes with the vast stretches of level prairie, where,

"There are no hills, although one ran
For miles beyond the outer rim."

for,

"The large remoteness of the air
Had found within my heart a place."

and ever and anon before my mind's eye stretched a long, smooth beach of yellow sand with the ceaseless rhythm of the surf beating upon it, and the rise and fall of countless waves, carrying the eye seemingly into eternity, so dimly distant was the horizon where the sea and sky met! And here I was, shut up in town, with nothing before me but weeks of taxing, relentless work! I was out of mood with myself, and, of course, with my world. In vain my more rational self argued, "You stayed in town of your own accord. You must realize that this work you are doing is of more value than a vacation could be!" I moved petulantly in my chair, shifting my position uneasily. I was in no mood to be rebuked. "If there was only some diversion in between times!" I muttered. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy!" Then that rational self which is the God-image in each one of us whispered, "There are a thousand diversions all around you, if you choose to see them. One doesn't have to have mountains and oceans and thousands of miles of prairie air to see and feel the Eternal, the Infinite, the Divine! Look at the sand-pile and what is going on there, and you will

find enough to fill a dozen leisure hours with pleasure, and profit too, if you will stop thinking about yourself and think about what a wonderful world this is in which you have the blessed privilege of living!"

Being thus sternly admonished, I turned my eyes to the sand-pile which had been left by the builders of the new house. A group of children had been inevitably attracted to it. Was there ever a sand-pile that did not attract children if they were within reach of it?

One sturdy boy of ten, with sleeves rolled to the armpits, was digging at one side of the sand-pile, evidently intent upon enlarging a hole which he had already made large enough to stand in. His only instrument for excavation was an old tin can and his two hands. He loosened the damp sand with his tin can and then scooped it out with his hands. The constant bending and rising caused by the digging and throwing out of the sand had brought rich red to his cheeks and a sparkle to his eyes. His small cap was pushed far back on his head, and every now and then he wiped the perspiration off of his face with the sleeve of his blouse. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread," I thought. "How

the curse of old Adam has been changed into the play of Adam's hundred-thousandth or ten-hundred-thousandth descendant! The habits of generations of toilers in the soil have so trained the muscles of the body that they rejoice in the labor of digging. Ah! is that the explanation of this boy's play? No, the brightness of that face comes from the feeling of triumphant mastery over nature. For countless ages man has grappled with the binding despotism of nature, has struggled and has gained, or is slowly gaining, the knowledge which gives to him the power to use all her forces as he wills. It is this divinely implanted instinct in the boy that makes him dig so persistently and energetically on this warm day. Bless him, I am glad he has a spot where he can dig without being scolded for spoiling the looks of the back yard!"

That other boy over there sprawling lazily on the sand with his legs far apart, occasionally kicking up one heel and then the other, is idly grasping a handful of sand, and just as idly letting it run through his fingers. He is only beginning, as it were, to feel a dim consciousness of this same power of man to transform matter. He is only testing its form-

ableness. Even that is being listlessly done. No creative impulse is driving him forward to make his mark in the world, even if that mark be, at present, only a hole in a sand-pile. I wonder how much his indolent ancestors are to blame for his not having caught up in the race development with the boy who is digging the hole. I wonder how much the mother's ignorance of how to prepare wholesome food has to do with his lack of energy and loss of vigorous play. I wonder if possibly some deeper sin of his father has sapped the springs of life and given him as an inheritance a feeble constitution or a weak will. Anyhow, he is losing to-day's enjoyment, and will probably be more or less of a laggard through life. Heaven help the child who does not care to play heartily! Life can never make up for that loss!

What of this third boy, who is standing there with his hands thrust into his pockets and is giving directions in a tone of authority to two younger boys? They are busy molding first one thing and then another out of the moist sand. He stands coolly looking on, now criticising, now encouraging their efforts, but never once stooping to lend a hand to their

work. What will he be? A critic? always ready to find fault with what other people are trying to do, but never himself doing anything worth finding fault with? Or, is he a born leader, one who sees statues in the unchiseled block of marble, farms on untilled prairies, cities rising along unbuilt railroads? Sure it is that he sees results more quickly than the average boy—can "look ahead," as the saying is. In how far is his training to be held accountable for the final outcome of this tendency of talent of his? Will it develop into cynicism or into leadership? Can the sarcasm of his teacher turn his power downward? or her encouraging smile turn it upward? Lesser things than these have changed men's lives. And what about the two boys who are just at present carrying out his commands? Neither of them seems to have the slightest desire to rebel against his authority, nor does either of them make a suggestion as to the work they are doing. Are they in the stage of hero-worship? Or, will there always be people without ideas of their own? Is there ever a mortal born without some original genius? I believe not. Each one of us has some message for the world, some notes to play in the great

orchestra of life. How, then, is this originality to be awakened? In how far are children to be led to submit to a leader? Without such training all organized effort is impossible. And yet, unless a child is allowed to freely exercise his creative power, how is he ever to become conscious of it? Is not play primarily for this purpose? A score of such questions rise up as I watch the two patient little laborers toiling away at the command of another.

Here comes a fat, bull-necked boy. His low brow and thick lips tell of how near to the brute he is. He picks up a handful of sand and throws it at the two little fellows. It comes perilously near their eyes, but they are peaceful citizens, intent upon their work, so they pay no attention to the would-be brawler. He stoops, picks up a double handful of sand and throws it into their faces, this time with some jeering words. He is a born bully, for he has picked out the two smallest boys to taunt and torment. Is it a fight he wants? I think not, a bully rarely ever wants to fight. He is anxious to show his power, and his contempt for steady, honest pursuits. The group of boys have been getting along too

quietly to suit him. Again he throws a handful of sand into the faces of the two little underlings. They cry out. He laughs, and another taunt accompanies another handful of sand. Suddenly, from the other side of the sand-pile appears a tall boy in a red sweater. A few hot words ensue. I cannot hear them, but a fight is on. In less than three minutes the bully retreats, bellowing, and breathing out threats of dire revenge. The tall boy goes back to the other side of the sand-pile. Here is law, authority, military force, we may call it, settling the cause of right and justice when it could not be settled without force. And then peace returns and the mimic industries go forward. Is the fighting instinct a normal instinct in a boy? Will war always be necessary? Certain it is that as long as there are bullies in the world there will always have to be big boys who can thrash them and make them behave. But is there no way by means of which these boastful Goliaths can be turned into Saint Christophers? The old legend tells us that St. Christopher had once been a giant in the service of the devil, but the thought of the Christ changed him into a servant of the Cross. Is there no Christ-thought, no ideal

that can be brought before these bull-necked offspring of ignorance and vice that will stir within them some better desires? Or must they always be thrashed into decent regard for other people's rights? Has anyone ever established a school for bullies? In the history of nations they are always thrashed. Will any Hague Arbitration Tribunal bring forth a better remedy?

But the group is not altogether masculine. The eternal law of attraction of sex comes here too. At one side, somewhat removed from the sand-pile, are two little girls of six and seven. They, true to the housewifely instincts of a thousand generations, are making sand pies, and turning them onto a long board, giving them loving little pats as they do so. One of them stops now and then on her way to and from the sand-pile for fresh supplies of sand to utter a word or two of admiration for the work of the vigorous hole-digger. (I wonder if her presence has anything to do with his digging so manfully.) Another of the "eternally feminine" element again and again fills a small basket with sand and thriftily carries it over into her own yard.

And so the play goes on. Heigh-ho! It is six o'clock! I am no longer weary, I am rested.

A SHOP SCENE.

The great store was crowded with hurrying, jostling, anxious people, each one intent upon his or her own purchase, regardless of everyone else. I stood idly waiting for my package, which I wished to take home with me, when my attention was attracted to the face of a young mother. Any keen observer of human faces can always tell a young mother. There is an expression of proud and tender humility on her face, especially if she has with her that marvelous being—her first child. They all have this something in common, be they rich or poor, high or low. I suppose it is this tender beauty shining through the plainest faces that made the old masters think that they could paint the Madonna—the mother of God—for there is in a young mother's face a touch of that far-off divine holiness which suggests angels and vast worlds of celestial thoughts. As I said, they all have it, though some young mothers express it in a tenderer, more refined way than do others, some even allow the loud notes of

their proud emotions to blare forth like a trumpet, but with most of them the softer, more sacred emotions of mother-love, although just as manifest, remind one of the muted violins in the vast orchestra of humanity, but it is the loveliest of *all* sounds to one who can hear the silent music of the soul.

This particular young mother was one of the latter class. Her fine-looking young husband was with her, and was vigorously pushing their baby boy's perambulator through the crowded aisle of the store. That she adored him one could easily see by the way she looked up at him, and the radiant smile that lighted her face if he chanced to return her glance. Still she was unaccustomed to having anyone else take charge of baby's perambulator, so even with her husband's strong hand on its handle she involuntarily reaches out her own daintily gloved hand to steer it if the crowd opened a space through which they might pass, and ever and anon her head bent down unconsciously to see if her young princeling was all right.

They made their way to a toy counter just opposite to the one against which I was idly leaning. "Here it is!" exclaimed the sweet,

fresh voice of the young mother. "See, darling! See the pretty pussy-cats." This to the two-year-old boy, bending lovingly over him, much as the worshiping angel bent over the sleeping Christ-child in the pictures by Fra Angelica or Botticelli. "Well, my son," said the father, "which will you have, a pussy-cat or a doggie-dog?" The tone was an inimitable blending of proud comradeship with his young son and fond fatherly love for his baby boy. "Oh, dad-dad, dad-dad!" cried the little fellow, raising his body and stretching up that he might the better observe the array of animal toys in the showcase. "Oh, dad-dad!" he repeated in affectionate tones of excited pleasure. "Well, which shall it be, my boy?" said the father, "a pussy-cat?" "Puzze-kad, puzze-kad!" exclaimed the child, extending both arms toward the coveted treasure. "Wait a minute, my son," said the father, gravely, although his eyes were shining with the pleasure of the child, "Think a bit. Wouldn't you rather have a doggie-dog?" pointing to a spotted tin dog in the showcase. "A doggie-dog, dad-dad!" gurgled the child, turning his eyes and outstretching his hands toward the particular toy dog which the

father had pointed out. The father laughed a gleeful, boyish laugh as he turned toward his young wife to see if she were observing how completely he could control his son's attention and interest. I wondered if he faintly realized what a responsibility that power laid upon him. Her look of adoration seemed to satisfy him, for he turned again to the child. "Look here, young man," he said, "you want to make up your mind as to what you want, and then stick to it." (Ah, me! there was such fatherly pride in this admonition, such a revelation of the day-dreams of what he wanted his son and heir to become.) "Now, then, which shall it be, the pussy-cat or the doggie-dog?" "Oh, dad-dad! Gim'me, gim'me puzze-kad, gim'me, gim'me doggie-dog!" and the young monarch of all he had ever surveyed reached out both hands to his father. "Here, here, youngster, you will break me if you don't look out," cried the father in mock dismay. "Give me the dog," said he, turning to the saleswoman, who stood waiting with a bored expression upon her face. Why couldn't she see that here was something sweeter than green fields and fresher than pure air? Had the mother-love in her heart

died of starvation? Had she killed it by an artificial life of false excitements and selfish indulgences? If she would but realize it, every day there was passing before her eyes a panorama of human joys and sorrows that was far more thrilling than the most thrilling novel could tell or gas-lit theater could portray.

The dog was nonchalantly handed out and paid for. As it reached the child's hands he uttered a prolonged "Oh-h-h" of ecstacy, and the father involuntarily stooped down and kissed the little forehead while waiting for his change.

The child had time to look at his new treasure as they waited, and then to hold it out toward another child, a year or two older than himself, who was being dragged along by her mother. "See, see dad-dad's doggie," cried the boy, as he held his treasure toward the little girl. The child thus appealed to hesitated, smiled and almost stopped. His joyful desire to share his pleasure with her was too great to be resisted. "Come along! What are you stopping for?" exclaimed the mother, as she gave her a jerk. Then her eyes fell upon the boy with his toy outstretched in his

hand. She frowned and gave her child another jerk, "Come along! You don't know that child." And she hurried on. The boy looked astonished and instinctively turned his eyes questioningly toward his father. "It's all right, my son. Father will look at it." And the man stooped and again kissed the forehead of the child. "Oh, dad-dad!" joyfully exclaimed the child, his peace of mind being once more restored, "Kiss de doggie!" The father stooped again and touched his lips to the toy.

The change for which they had been waiting came, and in a moment more they moved on. The crowd closed in and hid them from my sight, but once again I heard the sweet, childish voice bubbling over with happiness further down the aisle, exclaiming, "Dad-dad, Kiss de doggie!"

The whole of this little domestic drama of one act took place in less than five minutes, but it remained in my heart all day, and I found myself exclaiming, "Thank God for little children, they are the salvation of the race!" What other power on earth could have made that well-dressed, well-groomed, self-satisfied man stoop down and kiss a little

tin dog in the presence of unnumbered witnesses? And yet, I feel sure, he was a better man for having thus shared in his child's joy. Then came, like a shadow over a sunlit landscape, the thought of that other child's mother. Would she ever realize that she was robbing both herself and her child of what is more precious than diamonds or rubies?

JACK AND THE ALLEY BOYS.

Jack was arrested yesterday! Our dear, dear, little Jack!

He fell into company with some older boys and with them indulged in the hilarity of throwing stones at some little girls. Of course I know it wasn't right for Jack to throw stones at girls. But then he is only seven years old, and who has ever taught him that it was unmanly to throw stones at creatures weaker than himself? And Jack is beginning to want to do manly things. His baby days are over. Why is it so hard for a mother to realize that her boy is no longer her baby? As for Jack's father, he was too busy making money to have any time to give to his son. Why, he hardly had time to read the daily newspapers; what time could he, a rising young lawyer, give to talk with the boy? He bought him nice clothes and expected to put him through college by and by. What more could be expected of a busy father?

So Jack had to look elsewhere for "manly" companionship. Naturally enough, he turned

to the ten and twelve-year-old boys who haunted the alley just back of his home. They allowed him to play mumbley-peg for pennies, and two of them could smoke *real* cigar stumps without getting sick at the stomach. Jack couldn't. He tried it and the big boys laughed at him when he grew pale and sick. Their greatest accomplishment in Jack's eyes was that they could swear, oh, such oaths that it made him tremble to hear them. So when the big boys began throwing stones at the prim young misses who stuck out their tongues at them, Jack began throwing stones too. Why shouldn't he? The big boys were his heroes. They even called him "kid" and permitted him to squat down behind the fence with them and listen to their talk. Of course Jack could not understand all that they said, for he had lived heretofore in his home with his mamma and had never been allowed to see much of other children; besides his mamma preferred his playing with girls, when he did play with other children. They made less noise than boys. It was only of late that Jack had been allowed to go with "the fellows." Therefore, he didn't know exactly why the big boys called each other "Capt." or

"Shanks" or "Slim" when their real names were Joe and Bill and Tom. But when they began calling him "Kid" he understood that these were secret names and that they meant some sort of distinction. Just what that distinction was he could not have told, but it didn't matter much. His new name meant that he was one of them now. When he heard them speak contemptuously of the policeman as "an old cop" his heart thrilled within him. So when the big boys began to throw stones Jack threw stones too. He could do that much, anyhow, even if he could not yet talk the wonderful dialect of alley slang.

But the irascible old gentleman who lived next door telephoned to the police to come! Why couldn't he have gone out and reasoned with the boys in a straightforward, manly way? Or, better still, why couldn't he have hired them to do some odd job of work for him by way of turning their surplus energies into a constructive activity? His yard needed raking over, his wood-pile needed straightening up, and his own heart needed warming up. I wonder if he was ever a little boy, or if he had forgotten how when seven years old he had loved to do as the big boys did. Well,

he acted as if he had never been a boy, and his angry telephone message brought two big burly policemen into our alley. And before the boys knew it they were all four "nabbed" and were being marched off to the police station.

To be sure, they were merely talked to by the big police officer in charge of the station, and were dismissed with a warning that a second arrest would mean a "lock-up."

But the disgrace in our highly respectable neighborhood was just as great as if they had already been locked up, and the news had spread like wild-fire, "Jack Halloway had been arrested!" And we knew only too well that it would be on the tongue of every school child before a week had passed, and Jack would be branded by these fierce little Pharisees as a bad boy.

"What shall we do?" exclaimed Gertrude as she paced nervously up and down the floor. "Think of our Jack being called 'a jail-bird,' 'a coppe-catch'—'a thug,' just as likely as not! There will be a dozen odious names invented or imported before to-morrow night," she continued. "And just think of our dear, sensitive Jack's having to endure it all. What can we do?"

I pretended to go on with my writing, and said nothing. What could I say? I knew even better than she the mischief that had been done. I was older and far back in the past I had had an experience which sickened me even yet whenever I recalled it, although twenty years had come and gone since that dark day when another boy with just such earnest dark eyes as Jack's had been branded for a childish sin! And there had been no soul near him wise enough to save him!

"We must do something!" Gertrude cried, suddenly stopping in front of me. "Yes," I replied, "But it will take time. I will try to find a chance to talk with Jack's father about him." "What good will that do," she exclaimed, petulantly. "He will merely give you a well-bred stare and manage to let you know that he considers you a meddlesome woman! No, no, no, you can never reach his father! It is Jack himself we must get hold of!"

"Yes, we'll try," I answered, still mechanically moving my pen across the page. I did not want even Gertrude to know how the old wound was bleeding. I knew that she had spoken wisely—we must get hold of Jack, our dear, loving-hearted, thoughtless Jack! What

could we two spinsters do when neither his father nor mother understood him nor helped him? But we could try—there was always some comfort in that—we could try.

That evening Jack's young mother, a blond-haired young creature with a charming dimple in her chin and a pretty pout on her red lips, came in and said she wanted to have "a real talk" with me. So Gertrude disappeared while Jack's child-mother and I sat in the gathering twilight and talked about Jack, of course.

She said he puzzled her; she didn't see why he wanted to go with those horrid Sloam boys. She had whipped him twice for going with them, and then he had lied to her about being with them the next time she questioned him! What more could she do? His father would be "horrid mad" with Jack when he heard about the arrest. No, of course she hadn't told him about it yet. She had shut Jack up-stairs in his room and would not let him have any supper. Hadn't she done right? This last was said with tears brimming in her eyes. Perhaps she had read some disapproval in my face. I don't know. "What more can I do?" she asked. "Shall I tie him up?" Her pretty

mouth trembled now, and the tears dropped on her clasped hands. "I don't see why Jack can't be satisfied with his toys and his picture book," she continued; he used to like them and to play with me in his nursery. But now nothing seems to satisfy him but to be with those horrid Sloam boys." Then she wished the Sloam boys would move out of the neighborhood, or that she could persuade Jack's father to sell their home and move into a neighborhood where there were no bad boys. Her helplessness appealed to me. I tried to explain to her that Jack was no longer a little child; he was a boy now, and needed a larger world than his nursery and the back yard; that he was longing for larger and more varied experiences, and that this longing was perfectly natural, in fact, it would show a sad lack of mental growth if he did not want a larger world.

She gazed at me with big, childish eyes filled with surprise. Seeing that she did not understand my generalities, I began to particularize. "I would suggest," I continued, "that you so arrange your housework that after school on pleasant days you could go with Jack for a long walk, or take a tramp to some

unfamiliar locality or a street car ride to the next suburb. Send him on errands to the grocery or the dry goods store," I added. "Take him into the city with you on Saturdays, occasionally. Get his father to take him out on Sunday afternoons. In such ways enlarge his little world yourselves, so that he will not seek the Sloam boys for a change or new experience. "Perhaps it might be well," I suggested, "to invite some of his nice schoolmates in to take tea with you. This would probably result in his being invited to eat in some of their homes. This, too, would help to satisfy his hunger for new experiences." We talked on for a while longer and she thanked me for the suggestions I had given. When she rose to go I followed her to the door and saw Jack and Gertrude coming across the lot, both warm and flushed by their rapid walk. They were chatting merrily together, evidently they were just returning from one of their long walks together.

To-day is Saturday, and just after our noon meal I chanced to see Jack dressed in his best suit with a stiff collar and a big bow necktie (how he hates those babyish big bows), starting from his home, tugging in a sullen sort of

a way at a pair of kid gloves into which he was striving to thrust his hands. Following a short distance behind him were his father and mother, both dressed as for an entertainment. All three seemed out of mood and in a hurry of unpleasant excitement. As they disappeared in the direction of the railway station I surmised that they were going to town, and the thought of them dropped out of my mind.

To-night, however, Jack's mother came in to see me in quite a flutter of pleasure. She said she had told Jack's father what I had said about Jack needing a change. "And," she added, triumphantly, "he took Jack and me to a vaudeville show this afternoon, and he has promised to take us, or to send us, every Saturday! Won't that be fine."

Gertrude was right, we must get hold of Jack himself!

THE BOY AND THE SCARLET COAT.

One bright, frosty morning, when the air was full of life-giving energy, I chanced to be crossing one of the small parks which the wisdom of the twentieth century has planted in our congested city districts. Just in front of me walked a young mother and her two-year-old son. I judged that this was her first child from the fact that, although she herself was quite plainly dressed, the boy was gorgeously attired in a scarlet coat, white astrakhan cap, white cloth leggins and white mittens.

Young mothers frequently feel that they must give vent to their proud joy of ownership by arraying their offspring in the most expensive clothing they can possibly afford. Their sacrifice of their former girlish vanity, and innocent enough desire to be charmingly dressed themselves, is often touching proof of the self-forgetting nature of maternal love, although to the student of childhood this is a sadly mistaken way to show it.

Near the center of the park was a thicket or cluster of barberry bushes. The little fel-

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low let go of his mother's hand, and, running forward, parted two of the bushes and peered in. It was evidently a new phase of nature to him, a field of discovery! For a moment he hesitated and looked back toward his mother, then forward into the bushes. The lure of the unknown was too great to be resisted. He parted the bushes and stepped in among them, at first timidly, then the excitement of the adventure became intoxicating, and he steadily pushed farther and farther into the bushes, looking up now and then at the taller ones, whose spreading branches met over his head. This was, indeed, an adventure worth having.

"No, no, my boy," called the mother, as she quickened her steps. "Come out of those bushes!" But the boy pushed farther in. Here was a new experience in his limited world. Hitherto he had been a "sidewalk child," and had trodden beaten paths. This was evident from the timidity which he had shown when he first ventured into the thicket. But the eager haste with which he now pushed branch after branch aside and the steady determination with which he squeezed his chubby body between close-growing bushes showed

that all the pioneer instincts of his ancestors were awakened. "Did you not hear me, Ned?" called his mother. "Come out of those bushes, they will dirty your clothes." Alas! alas! how many times have fine clothes checked the spirit of adventure! One has but to recall how the wise old Solon advised the Persian general not to kill off the young men of a province which he had conquered, but to dress them in soft silk and fine linen and thus enervate them, and they would not want to throw off his tyrannous yoke.

However, my two-year-old had evidently come of sturdier stock. The appeal to his supposed interest in his scarlet coat and white cloth leggins was of no avail. The young mother had to enter the thicket and drag him back to the beaten path. As she vigorously brushed the precious coat, she exclaimed, "You naughty, naughty boy! See how you have dirtied your clothes! Just look at your coat with those dry leaves stuck all over it!" No mention was made of any other cause for her irritation than this,—that his clothes, for which he was not in the least responsible, had been slightly soiled by contact with the barberry bushes. How I longed to have a game of

hide-and-seek with him in those same bushes; to see his eyes dance, and hear his shout of delight when he discovered me; to feel the growing consciousness of selfhood which would come to him as he hid from me; and the quickened social instinct as he would rush out of hiding and reunite himself with me! But—ah, me—what *would* have been the condition of the scarlet coat and the white cloth leggins at the end of the romp! And yet, I doubt not that the young mother loved her boy a thousand times more than I ever could have loved him. The trouble was she showed her love through outer adornment of his body instead of helping the inner development of power to master each new condition which life presented.

The two passed on. The sunlight on the frost-covered grass of the park next attracted the attention of the youngster. Again he dropped his mother's hand as the "touch-hunger" common to all children called out for satisfaction. He stepped over onto the frost field, and stooping, touched it with his hand. The glitter and sparkle vanished! Here was a mystery, indeed! He stood up, looking puzzled and perplexed, then the "touch-hunger"

called again for testimony, and, bending over once more, he passed his small white mitten over the glittering specks of frost. As fast as they disappeared he brushed a new patch of grass. Here, indeed, was an evidence of his power over nature! "Come off that grass, you little nuisance," called his mother. "See! see!" answered the child excitedly, and he brushed away more of the sparkling white. "That's nothing but frost," said the mother. "Come along, you are dirtying your nice gloves."

The contempt in her tone took the glory out of the frost world. What other standard of the beauty or of the mystery of nature could he have than hers? He had felt the appeal of the frost-covered ground, but she had spoken in derision of it, so the little fellow returned to her side. Perhaps some day she would sigh because her boy did not show any love for nature, and would wonder why he preferred the excitement of the city streets to a day in the woods.

The sharp frost of the night had scattered a number of willow twigs on the pathway. The child stooped and picked up one of them. Here was new material for him to experiment

with. He began bending it back and forth. Elasticity was now revealing itself to his young mind. "Throw that dirty stick away," said the young mother. But a stronger command than hers was telling him to find out just how far this willow twig would bend. It was the race-instinct, the same that had brought about man's first mastery over wood. So the boy did not obey her. She took the twig out of his hand and tossed it away, as she once more brushed his clothes, saying as she did so, "What shall I do with you! You seem determined to spoil your pretty clothes! Now see if you can't walk along like a nice, clean little boy."

Silently I mused as I walked on. I wondered what that mother would have thought had I said to her, "Madam, why do you value your child's clothing more than his heart's glow or the quickening which nature was trying to give to his mind? You are doing that which is worse than stifling his body, you are stifling his inner life."

KATIE MacMAHON.

When I first moved into the neighborhood, the large, broad-chested charwoman who helped me to transform the chaos of moving into the cosmos of home informed me that my next-door neighbor's name was Miss Dorothy Duncan; that she was "a real nice lady," but that she "enjoyed ill-health most of the time," and so did not go out much.

The next morning I chanced to see Miss Duncan as she stood on her porch, fastening into the proper place some stray branches of the wistaria vine which the wind had dislodged the night before. She was tall and sparely built. Her hair was iron gray, and, although her head was turned from me, I judged from her thin neck and colorless ear that her face was thin and pale. Over her shoulders she wore a small white shawl. There is perhaps no better evidence of physical vigor or lack of vigor than the pose of chest and shoulders; and her profile showed relaxed shoulders, that meant depressed chest, *i. e.*, ill-health.

I sighed involuntarily as I thought, "Poor thing, another one of the left-overs." Alone in

the world, with old age fast approaching and ill-health already fastened upon her. Instinctively I began to wonder to how great an extent I would have to be taxed by listening to her accounts of her "bad nights"—I was sure she had plenty of bad nights—and was rapidly making an estimate of how much of my precious time would have to be consumed in giving courteous attention to her detailed accounts of her aches and ailments.

I had moved to the suburbs to get more time for study and writing, but of course I knew one could not utterly ignore one's neighbors in a suburb as in the social isolation of a great city. In fact, if the truth be told, I had felt the barrenness of my city life and had realized that I was becoming *dehumanized* by it, and had counted on neighbors as one of the assets to be gained by moving out to where air and sunshine were not too expensive to be indulged in by people of modest means. Still, I had not planned for recitals of the torture of neuralgia, the pangs of rheumatism or the melancholy forebodings caused by indigestion. I was not altogether heartless, but I had counted on neighbors as a recreation, not an added care.

Just at that moment Miss Dorothy Duncan turned her face toward me, and in an instant I realized that she *enjoyed* something, if not ill-health, then something else, which was as ever-present as was her ill-health. I had surmised correctly; her face was thin and lacking in color—but her eyes! I had not thought of what kind of eyes she might have. They were deep blue eyes, fringed with long black lashes, but it was their expression of perfect peace which told of the rich, silent soul-life within this frail body that made them so attractive to me. I have never seen such eyes on any other human being. They said so much, and yet gave you the same feeling that comes when one views the vast aerial perspective of far-extended prairies. They seemed to hold in reserve so much more than they expressed. Year afterwards I learned through what suffering and what struggle had been born the peace that made her eyes so wonderful. She smiled and bowed slightly, and, although her smile was sweet and gentle and lighted up her face as does a soft afterglow which sometimes follows a fine sunset, it, like everything else about her, was secondary to those strong yet tender,

far-seeing eyes. When later on I heard her speak I found that her voice, like her smile, was sweet and gentle, low in tone, yet with the distinct enunciation that marks well-bred people. But as yet I knew nothing of her voice, nothing of her past training. But I looked into those deep, beautiful eyes and, well, I might as well confess it, I fell head-over-ears in love with her on the spot. I afterward found out that plenty of other people had done the same thing before, and many more did it in the years that followed, long beautiful years in which I learned to count as my greatest blessing the fact that Dorothy Duncan was my next-door neighbor and my friend. One of greatest charms was that she joined a rare inner culture with an almost childish enjoyment of the common every-day things of life. The ordinary blossoms of June-time became miracles when she called your attention to the richness of their color or the softness of their texture. The activities of an ant-hill in the garden walk became a consuming drama if she leaned over it with you. The fretwork of shadows which the street-lamp caused the trees to cast upon the porch floor became as fascinating as Saracenic carv-

ings if she chanced to sit beside you, and as to sunsets, they were as much enjoyed as great orchestral performances if she were with you when the heavens played their mighty symphony of color. Yet she never wearied you with these things, she simply loaned you her eyes and you saw undreamed-of beauty all about you. You might glance through the morning paper and throw it down with an exclamation of disgust because its headlines told only of the riot of lust and greed or the trickery of avarice, or the selfish vanity of some social set seeking notoriety; and ten minutes later she would stir you with the account of some generosity of wealth or some deed of bravery which that same paper had given, or she would have you laughing over the unconscious humor of some misfit announcement that had escaped your notice, or before you knew it she would have you discussing the leading editorial. She was merely lending you the quickness of her wits, yet she was never sparkling, rarely ever what might be called vivacious, although her sense of humor was abundant.

It goes without saying that her interest in the people about her was greater than her in-

terest in the things by which she was surrounded. She was the chief friend, adviser and helper of every individual in the neighborhood; yet she was never meddlesome, never prying. Others came to her with their joys and their sorrows; she did not go to them. But her sympathy never failed, and each one knew that his or her confidence was a sacred trust so far as Miss Dorothy Duncan was concerned. Mothers talked over their problems with her, and many a child went to her with its childish doubts and perplexities.

I believe, after all, her strongest point was her love of children and her beautiful way of dealing with them. Somehow she seemed always to expect them to be their best and always treated them as if they were little gentlemen and ladies, not little prigs, but with manners enough not to quarrel or be selfish when with her, and somehow they usually lived up to her expectations. She gave them her standards of conduct, that was all. They were ordinary children, with ordinary faults, but somehow they became wonderfully interesting specimens of humanity when she was with them. She loaned you her imagination if you chanced to be with them when she was there,

and somehow you felt that there was no such thing as an ordinary child. John and Jack and Harry allured you into the study of their individuality, and before you knew it you were puzzling over their manifestations inherited from long lines of ancestors; while Susie and Ethel and Marie Ann captivated you by instantly reflecting the influences of the environment about them. Why hadn't you thought of all this before? And you a teacher too. All you had ever learned in the normal school about heredity, environment and self-activity were insignificant compared with a few months of watching this woman's understanding of the children of the neighborhood, and before you knew it you were enjoying them almost as much as she enjoyed them. She loaned you her heart that was all. How can I describe her relationship to children? As I have said, she treated them as equals, never talked down to them, never ignored their presence, and her inner world was so rich and full and varied and theirs so simple and limited and empty of any content which would have seemed significant to you or me, yet they never seemed to bore her. Perhaps I can best help you to understand the life she led with

these children and the influence she exercised upon them by relating some one of the almost daily occurrences in which, by a touch, as it were, she would transform darkness into light, or sadness into joy for this or that child. The particular occasion which comes just now into my mind was one morning when by a few words she changes a child's shame and misery into honor and glory. It was perhaps because I so keenly enjoyed the after sequence that I recall the scene so vividly.

The time was early June and Miss Dorothy sat on her shady side porch shelling peas for dinner. Little Katie MacMahon sat on a low stood beside her, proudly helping to shell the peas. It was always considered an honor by the neighborhood children to help Miss Dorothy. Little Katie MacMahon was the only girl in the large family of partially disreputable and always dirty MacMahon boys who lived with their shiftless father and slatternly mother in the shabby old frame house in the alley just beyond Judge Nelson's barn. Our neighborhood was a thrifty, respectable neighborhood. We were not rich enough to have to be formal in our intercourse with each other and not poor enough to disregard each

other's privacy. The MacMahons were the only family of what is known as "city poverty" that we had with us. Just why the old frame house had been allowed to remain in our prosperous suburb, and just how it had held together year after year without paint or repairs, was always a wonder to me. Each year the roof sagged a little more, each winter a few more bricks tumbled out of one or the other of the two chimneys, each spring a few more panes of glass were broken and a few more rags were stuffed in to fill up the holes in the autumn, and almost every year a new baby was born to the MacMahons until their muster roll was now, Jerry, aged 12; Jimmy, aged 11; Michael, aged 10; Danny, aged 9; Katie aged 8; Johnny, aged 6; Roosevelt aged 4; and the baby aged 2. I must not forget the three dogs and the two Maltese cats, as they are a part of the story I am about to relate. Of course rabbits, guinea pigs, white mice and the like came and went in the MacMahon household, but they were not members of the family, whereas the three dogs and two Maltese cats were fed at the table and slept in the house, and, so far as one could see, were treated in the same happy-go-lucky way as

were the children. They even received their share of the beatings, which I am glad to say were not as frequent as might have been expected? Old Tommy MacMahon (he was not forty-five, but everybody called him Old Tommy) was easy-going, even when under the influence of liquor, and his wife was too lazy to punish more than with a box of the ear unless she were unusually irritated by her husband's having spent all the week's earnings at the saloon, then wifely shame, motherly solicitude and perhaps personal hunger manifested themselves by her seizing the first child or dog she came across, as the case might be, and giving him or it what she called a "good round walloping." Herein she showed a fine discrimination in English, as Webster defines the word "wallop" as boiling or bubbling up. And such chastisements were never for the purpose of punishing an offender, or revealing the nature of a misdeed, but merely to relieve her own nerves.

But let us come back to my story. What a long way we have wandered from Miss Dorothy and her sunny porch! However, the digression was necessary in order that you might realize the fact that even in our neighborhood

we had the upper and lower strata of society, varying in shades and degrees from Judge Nelson and his stately wife down to the MacMahons, for upon this distinctly marked feeling of caste hangs the joy of my story. Little Katie MacMahon was lame and rather slow in her movements and in consequence had been given almost no training in household duties by her easy-going mother, who frequently declared that she would rather have her "out from under her feet than to be bothered with her." So, whenever the weather permitted, Katie and the dogs were turned out of doors each morning before the so-called cleaning up began. Of course she soon drifted over to the brooding, fostering care of Dorothy Duncan. For as steel filings seek the magnet, children are drawn towards motherly women, therefore it was not an uncommon sight to see her and Miss Dorothy performing some light housework together, although Hannah, who had reigned supreme in Miss Duncan's kitchen for twenty years, grumbled and growled occasionally over the untidiness of the little girl. I picked up my sewing and joined my friend and her little protege on the shady porch. Miss Dorothy was telling a fairy tale about a

beautiful princess who was visited by her fairy godmother on each of her birthdays. "I am going to have a birthday next week," interposed Katie, "Then," she added, eagerly, "my papa's going to buy me a great big doll, as big as a real baby, and my mamma's going to give me a whole lot of candy, enough to give some to all the children in the neighborhood." It was evident that the MacMahon imagination had awakened, so why stop short of princely doings. "And my brother Jerry," she continued, "is going to take us all over to the Zoo, and—" "Yes, I guess you'll do all that," drawled out a voice, contemptuously. "Your daddy drinks like a fish; he can't even pay his grocery bill; I heard Mr. Harding say so. I think I see him buying you a doll as big as a baby." Hot indignation at the boy's cruel taunt rushed over me. I knew it was Arthur Nelson, Judge Nelson's ten-year-old son, who had spoken. They were the wealthiest family in the neighborhood, and the boy had most unfortunately been brought up to feel himself superior to all the other children because his father had done something worth while in the world. And this feeling of superiority, not being accompanied by any effort to live up

to his father's standard, had degenerated into a supercilious contempt for most of the people about him. Katie's face crimsoned and her head drooped as a flower might droop at the sudden touch of frost. She was a warm-hearted child and loved her good-for-nothing father with a devotion that made this sudden exposure of his weakness almost more than she could bear. I saw the quick winking of her eyes to keep back the tears, and the nervous biting of the lips to stop their quiver of pain. The boy stood with his feet apart, his hands in his pockets and his head a little to one side, watching the effect of his taunt. Miss Dorothy continued shelling the peas as if nothing had happened. "Good morning, Arthur," she said pleasantly, "would not you like to help me get these peas ready for dinner? Hannah is quite busy this morning." Of course he wanted to help; every child in the neighborhood, as I have already stated, felt it a privilege to help Miss Dorothy do anything, no matter what. In a moment or two he had brought a chair from the dining-room and was eagerly sharing in the shelling of the peas. The three worked on in silence for a few minutes, long enough to allow little Katie to re-

gain her self-control. "And next Thursday is your birthday, Katie. So it is, I had almost forgotten that it came this month." Miss Dorothy spoke so quietly that no note in her voice indicated the slightest inward disturbance. "I would like to have you come over and dine with me that evening. When you go home to-day will you ask your mother to let me have you for that part of your birthday, or shall I write her a note about it?" "Oh, Miss Dorothy," was all that Katie could say, but the clasped hands, the radiant face, the joyful tone in which were uttered these three words showed that the sensitive young heart which the moment before had been battling with wounded pride and humiliated love had suddenly leaped from the black abyss of social ostracism and stood once more in the sunlight of human comradeship. I glanced at Arthur. He had dropped upon the porch floor the handful of peas he was shelling and was staring at Miss Dorothy with an expression of mingled amazement and indignation. What could she be thinking of to invite that dirty littie Irish Katie MacMahon into her dainty dining-room to *dine* with her. Why even he, Arthur Nelson, had never *dined* with Miss Duncan. He

had lunched with her once in a while if he chanced to be in her house when luncheon was announced, but to be ceremoniously invited to *a dinner* was to his mind the climax of social distinction. He had absorbed a good many of his mother's ideas of conventional society and an invitation to dine with anyone brought to his mind the vision of cut glass and dainty china and long, formal courses of expensive food.

He turned and looked at Katie. There was no contempt now in his face; instead there was a puzzled look of wonder, almost of admiration. I could not help thinking of the stories of disguised princesses suddenly being changed by some fairy wand from beggar maids into royal personages.

Unless one has lived in a small conservative village where the record of one's parents and grandparents have been handed down as town property one can have no realization of the keen demarkation of social strata that exists in such places. The news of the invitation rapidly spread. The simple dinner was soon magnified by childish imagination into "a big party with lots and lots of ice cream and candy?" Katie suddenly became the most

popular child in the neighborhood. Invitations to attend the party were hinted at each day. Arthur, who hitherto had been the acknowledged social leader of the community, held aloof for a day or two, then changing his policy on the day before the birthday, accompanied by Katie, appeared on Miss Dorothy's porch and asked for an invitation, strengthening his position with "Katie wants me to come. Don't you, Katie?" and docile, kind-hearted little Katie, flattered (as has been many a climber into society) by the unusual attention said "Yes." Miss Dorothy Duncan, however, was equal to every situation. There was to be no "butting in" upon her social arrangements. She quietly replied, "No, Arthur, I can't invite you without inviting some of the other children; this is to be a dinner for Katie and me only." Arthur looked baffled, but the two went off the porch together, and I heard Arthur say, "Come over to our yard this afternoon, Katie, and I'll play ball with you." Katie went, of course.

On the morning of the birthday, before breakfast Miss Duncan's bell rang. There stood Katie. "I came to tell you," she said, her face beaming with happiness, "that I sure-

ly am coming to-night. Ma washed my pink calico dress last night, and she is ironing it now; Jerry is getting breakfast so she can, and Mikey is takin' care of the baby for Jerry." Evidently social aspiration was stirring the MacMahon family. The daughter of the house was to be received in society that evening.

"All right," answered Miss Dorothy, without a quiver of a smile, "come over at six o'clock." Katie limped away accompanied by two of the family of dogs who had followed her on her errand of making sure that the invitation still held good.

At five-thirty the children of the neighborhood assembled on my front porch to await the arrival of Katie. At five-forty Jerry, Jimmy and Michael MacMahon filed out of the alley house and took their station just across the street from Miss Duncan's front door. At five-forty-five, Johnny and Roosevelt joined them. These two younger members of the family had evidently been prepared for the occasion; their faces, necks and ears were shining from recent contact with soap, and their curly hair had been wet and plastered down. In a minute or two more the three

dogs appeared, but were ignominiously driven back by Jerry. His sister's entrance into society was evidently not the time for dogs to be present. The five brothers stood in a line, each face aglow with happiness over Katie's celebration. At five-fifty there was a flutter among the group of children on my porch, with whispered, "There she comes, look! look!" The five boys on the opposite side of the street had also felt the thrill of the approaching debutante, for Jerry and Jim immediately began a nonchalant picking up of pebbles and shying them down the street, to show that they were not the least excited over the matter in hand, while Mikey and Johnny began a scuffle by way of working off their surplus emotions. But little Roosevelt was too unsophisticated in the ways of the world to try to disguise his pride. He swung his arm high and shouted, "Hurrah," only to be jerked down, however, by Davie, and told to behave himself. I looked down the alley, and, sure enough, there came Katie, radiant in the stiffly starched pink calico. Evidently Mrs. MacMahon had risen to the occasion for once in her life. Her daughter's coiffure was the latest mode. Ordinarily Katie's hair hung down

her back in a tangled, frowzy plait; now it was plaited in two tight braids and wound around her not unshapely head. On each side of the head was a huge bow of cheap pink ribbon. It was an evidence of the motherly love and pride which have made many a mother scrimp and pinch in order that her daughter might appear well-dressed in society, and it touched my heart. She passed our porch group with nods and radiant smiles. There was no retaliation for past snubs in the sweet, childish heart. But the brothers on the other side of the street were properly ignored. It is not well to show too much family affection in public. Doubtless she knew their loyalty and they were sure of her love.

With an instinctive dignity she walked up the short pathway leading to Miss Duncan's porch. The door was opened by Miss Dorothy herself and as she shook hands with Katie we all saw that she had on her lavender gown, usually worn only on Sunday. The door closed behind them, and the brothers, having seen their sister safely through the ordeal, filed away. The group on my porch left by ones and twos, suddenly remembering

that they had supper at their own homes waiting for them.

An hour later word was passed around that Miss Dorothy Duncan was on her porch and was going to tell stories. That was always a signal for every child who could to station himself on the porch steps or floor, for among her other excellences Miss Dorothy was a delightful storyteller.

As the afterglow faded from the summer sky and the gentle twilight settled down upon our small community there was a breaking up of the interested group of children and I heard Miss Dorothy's voice say, "Thank you, I have enjoyed telling the stories almost as much as any of you, but it is Katie you must thank, not me. It was she who suggested that we have stories this evening. Haven't we all enjoyed her birthday!" and a chorus of voices answered, "Yes, indeed!" Arthur Nelson and his cousin, Agatha Peabody, passed my door just as he was saying, "I think Katie MacMahon is the nicest girl in our neighborhood, don't you?"

A STARVED SOUL.

While spending the winter in the South one year, being somewhat troubled with my eyes, I asked my regular physician to recommend to me a good oculist. He thought for a moment or two and then said, "Young Dr. ———— has just returned from three years of study in Paris. I hear he has the latest scientific methods and apparatus. You might try him. He seemed to be a fine young fellow before he went away." Then he added, laughingly, "I reckon Paris hasn't spoiled him. I will give you a letter of introduction to him."

The next week, having made an engagement by letter with the young oculist, I went at the appointed hour to his office, which I found was in his own home in a pleasant resident part of the town.

It was a bright, sunny afternoon in late February. The children of the neighborhood were at play in the fresh, sunshiny air. Two little tots were digging vigorously in a sand-pile left by some recent builders. Several children were gathering yellow dandelions in a

vacant lot near by. Some boys were galloping as horses with cord reins held by equally spirited drivers. Two or three little girls were trundling their doll-carriages along the sidewalk with true motherly pride and solicitude. Every now and then one or another of them would stop and readjust her doll's pillow or carriage robe. Here was a group of neighborhood children gathered together in eager but friendly discussion concerning some new project upon which they were about to venture. A little farther on were larger boys who had taken possession of a side street and were playing ball so vigorously that every muscle in their bodies seemed to be in exercise as they bowed or bent or leaped into the air to catch the ball, or ran far down the street after it, in case they failed to catch it. All around me was the life-giving air and sunshine and the children at play in such surroundings seemed to me to have all that children most longed for. Nothing could have been better for their physical upbuilding than such vigorous, free play, and nothing could have been better for their social training for comradeship than their voluntary co-operation in this same free play.

My thoughts traveled back to the little ones of my own home city in the North, who at this season of the year were imprisoned in furnace-heated rooms. And I mentally ejaculated, "Bless them! I wish they were every one of them here enjoying this balmy air and filling their hearts with the love of Nature's blue sky and green fields!" I consoled myself with the thought that many hundreds of them were at least in kindergartens, learning to use hands and heads and hearts in co-operation with other children. And my thoughts, naturally enough, traveled back to scenes and experiences in these child-gardens of the North.

I suddenly remembered that I had not come out to watch children at play, nor for a leisurely saunter in the pleasant air, but that I was on what was to me an important errand. So I began to look at the numbers on the houses. In a few moments my eyes were attracted by the pathetically sad face of a child about five years of age, which was pressed close against the window-pane of an upper window of a handsome brick house. The wistful blue eyes looked longingly out at a group of children who were playing just in front of the house. The pretty yellow hair

that framed the sad little face was carefully curled and tied back with a large blue ribbon bow. And her dainty white frock showed that she was fondly cared for. Yet the face was one of the loneliest, saddest faces I had ever seen on a child. "Poor little thing!" I thought, "She must be a cripple shut away from all this joyous child-life." I nodded and smiled, and the child instantly smiled back. Just then I discovered that the house was the one for which I was hunting. With the pity for the little cripple still tingling in my heart, I rang the door-bell. Then I heard the sweet chatter of a child's voice calling to someone in the house as I waited. The door was opened by a maid in a snowy cap and apron. Imagine my surprise to see the little girl whom I had pictured as moving painfully about on crutches come running down the hall with a doll in her arms as if to meet a friend. I held out my hand and she took it. At the same time she looked up questioningly into my face with an anxious expression that puzzled me. The maid stated, in pretty broken English, that Monsieur, the doctor, had been much pained by one tooth and much regretted that he must go to the dentist, but would madam come in.

Monsieur, the doctor, would soon be home. In just one little time he would be here. "All right," I said, as I turned to enter the office. "The little girl will entertain me."

"Come here, and tell me about your dolls," I said to the child, who had dropped my hand, but stood listening with acute attention. She came into the office somewhat hesitatingly. I sat down and, holding out both hands, said, "Well, now, come here and tell me what is the name of your doll. Then I will tell you something about my dolls!" Instantly an expression of bitter disappointment overspread her face. And the haunting loneliness came again into her eyes. "Why, what is the matter, my child!" I exclaimed. "Come here, I want to talk to you. I am very fond of little girls, and of dolls, too." She merely shook her head and drew away as if I had hurt her. "Won't you come and talk to me while I wait for papa?" I said, coaxingly. She replied in a tone of bitterness, almost resentment, and backed out of the room shaking her head in a sad, weary fashion. What could be the matter? I was still puzzling over the situation when the handsome young wife of the oculist came into the room, and in a charming way

explained her husband's absence, and expressed regret over my having to wait for him.

She was delightful and we fell into an easy, pleasant conversation. Soon the door opened a little and in the crack appeared the wistfully sad face of the little child. Again I smiled and held out my hand. The mother said something to her. I did not understand what, and the child came into the room. Again I said, "Please let me see your dolly! Won't you?" Her mother again spoke to her. I did not catch what she said, but the child instantly came forward and laid the doll in my lap. Then looking searchingly into my eyes, she said eagerly in French, "*You* will understand me, will you not?" "What is it she is saying," I asked of the mother. "Oh, nothing," she replied, pleasantly, as she signaled to the child to leave the room. She does not speak English and she was asking if you would talk to her in French."

"Does not speak English!" I involuntarily exclaimed, "What do you mean?" The mother laughed an amused little laugh and said, "We have just returned from a three-year's residence in Paris, and while there Annetta acquired such an excellent French ac-

cent that I could not bear to have it spoiled. So we brought a French maid home with us, and I never allow Annetta to go out unless my maid or I go with her, as I do not wish her to hear other children talk in English. Her father and I always use the French language when speaking with her or in her presence."

"But," I protested—realizing fully that I was trespassing on forbidden ground—"are you not depriving her of much when you shut her away from all other children?" "Oh, yes," she replied. "She often begs to be allowed to go out to play with the children of the neighborhood, but I can't bear to have her beautiful French spoiled."

It was all clear to me now. I knew why the little face was so sad. Why the pathetic blue eyes had in them such depth of longing. Her poor little soul was starving for companionship. I rose and nervously began pacing up and down the room. Then summoning all the moral courage I could, I stopped before the mother and said, "Please pardon me, if what I say seems rude and intrusive, but I am a kindergartner, and have had the care of many scores of little children. They have been the study of my life. Do you not realize

that a child's *soul* can be starved as well as its body. Every child *needs* the companionship of other children, just as you and I need the society of our equals." Then I added as politely as I could, "Forgive me for the freedom I have taken with you, an entire stranger." She did not reply, but the smile was gone from her lips, and faint lines of worry came on her smooth, white forehead.

Just then the doctor came in, and the young mother excused herself, and left the office. When I was once more in the street I involuntarily glanced up at the window and there stood the lonely, sad-faced little girl, watching the other children at their play. Just as she had stood an hour ago when I first saw her. And then came trooping before me images of all the little lonely children who are shut away from companionship with other children because their mammas wish to be exclusive, or do not want Marie's or Herbert's manners spoiled, or fear contagious diseases or for some other such reason. And my heart grew fierce and hot as I thought of what such solitary confinement would mean to any of these fathers or mothers. Then the still small voice within whispered, "Father! forgive them, for they know not what they do!"

DAUGHTERS OF MEN.

I was on a suburban train one bright September day, when my attention was attracted by a group who sat across the aisle from me. It was evidently a father with his two children, who were returning home from a shopping expedition.

The man had the face of a refined gentleman, but his broad shoulders and alert ways showed the virility of a strong, masculine nature. The threads of silver here and there in his thick, dark hair also showed that the impulsive days of youth were over, and the firm lines about his shaven mouth and chin spoke of the habit of authority and command. Still there was a pleasant smile in his eyes and a kindly tone in his voice. On the seat opposite sat a boy about eight years of age, a manly-looking little fellow, and by his side was his six-year-old sister. Both children gave evidence of wholesome feeding and careful "grooming." It was quite apparent that their physical needs were well looked after.

It was the quiet, dignified conversation

which was being exchanged between father and son that first attracted my attention. My silent comment was, "He is certainly a father who *respects* his son. No wonder the boy is such a manly little fellow." They were nearing their destination, and the father had begun assorting several packages preparatory to leaving the train. "Here, my son," he said, "You may carry the basket of grapes. Take it carefully by the handle. Ah, that is right!" This last was said with a smile of approval, as the boy, with evident pride at being entrusted to such an extent, had carefully taken hold of the handle of the basket and had balanced it on his two knees.

The little girl looked up wistfully, but she sat still with her hands clasped tightly in her lap. The father next took up a lighter bundle. The little daughter's eyes grew anxiously bright and her slight body leaned eloquently toward her father. Her hands unclasped and one of them involuntarily moved forward a trifle. The yearning in the child's heart to share in the usefulness of her brother was clearly manifest, although she said not a word. But the father evidently did not see, or at least did not heed the mute appeal. How many

generations of fathers have been just as blind! And how many generations of daughters have been just as mute.

The bundle was laid down again. The father stood up slowly filling the capacious pockets of his light overcoat with other packages. Then, looking slightly perplexed, he again picked up the light-weight package. After a moment's hesitation, he said, laughingly, "My son, I seem to have more than I can carry. Do you think you can manage to take charge of this package also?"

"Oh, let me carry it! Please let me!" broke from the lips of the little girl. Her cheeks had flushed, and there was real heart-pleading in her tone. "No, no!" said the father, "Brother can carry it, I am sure. Can you not, Brother?"

"Of course I can," cried the boy, as, with the tone of inborn superiority derived from generations of masculine burden-bearing, he took the package and showed how he could carry the two. A momentary glance of triumph was cast toward the little sister. But it was enough to cause her to shrink back and retreat within herself, as the look of eager an-

ticipation which had come into her eyes died out.

As the train slowed up the three arose to their feet. "Well, I declare!" exclaimed the father, "I had almost forgotten my newspaper." As he picked up the closely rolled sheet a light once more broke over the face of the little girl. "Oh, father, let me carry it! *Please* let me!" There was no mistaking of the tone of entreaty now. Nor was there, to my mind, at least, any mistaking of the motive which caused the boy to hastily transfer his bundle to his hand which carried the basket. He reached out the hand thus freed, saying in an easy, indifferent tone, "Give it here! I'll carry it!" But the daughter of the house had been too quick for him. She had the coveted burden already in her hand and her eyes were full of happiness. She had asserted her right to be a sharer in life's burdens and had won! "Ah! pshaw! exclaimed the boy, contemptuously, "You can't carry anything! You'll drop it! Give it to me!" With these words he reached out his hand and took hold of the paper. A struggle ensued. A struggle as old as recorded history!

The father had already stepped out into the

car aisle. Turning his head, he saw the cause of the trouble, and, quickly adjusting a bundle which he himself was carrying, he leaned down and, taking the rolled newspaper from the girl's hand, he gave it to the boy with the remark, "Girls must not carry bundles! That is what brothers are for." Then he turned and the three left the car. But he saw not the droop of the shoulders nor the expression of despair that spread over the face of the little girl. Her lip quivered for a second and then she made a brave effort to smile. But it was a pathetic little smile, and only half concealed the chagrin of defeat.

As the train sped on I gazed out of the window, but I did not see the trees and pastures. Instead, there passed before me a long procession—centuries long—of "daughters who must not carry bundles," bending, sometimes breaking under the burdens which every true woman must sooner or later carry. And I wondered when well-meaning, loving fathers would learn that a hot-house training is not the best training for their daughters, who must one day take part in the battles of life, or let their souls wither and die under the first chilling frost of adversity, or, perhaps, what is

worse, far worse, through indolence grow callous and selfish and trample under foot the love and devotion which every true man brings to his bride, and unwittingly crush out this precious love, because she has never been trained to take responsibilities, and therefore does not know how to help him bear the burdens that must come sooner or later to all daughters as well as all sons of men.

HERBERT AT HIS GRANDMOTHER'S.

My friend Margaret Sayre and I were invited one summer to spend a week in the home of some friends in the beautiful valley of the Mohawk. Their house was one of those dear, old homesteads which had grown with the growing family, adding here a wing and there an ell, regardless of architecture or proportion. But it had the beauty of utility, that sure evidence of the sincerity of the life which had been lived within its walls. The yard, too, with its large lilac bushes, taller than a man's head, its old-fashioned roses and climbing honeysuckle told of the loving care which its owners had bestowed upon the place in years gone by. The undulating hills stretched to the far-away horizon and added to the air of quiet and peace that hovered over the entire landscape. It was the time for the harvesting of the hop fields which surrounded the village, and each morning a picturesque line of hop-pickers wended their way up the hill past my friend's house. The village itself lay silent and asleep in the sunshine. One felt as if the

vexatious problems of life could not enter here. I was soon to learn that such a notion was but a dream; for where life is must come life's problems. I found that the young married daughter of my hostess was spending the summer at the old home. She had with her her only child, a boy of five.

The grandmother expressed herself as pleased that we had come while the child was there, and lost no time in telling me privately that she hoped I would discover what was the matter with him. Nobody, she said, seemed to understand him. "And," she added, "He is a source of great anxiety to his father and mother. I am sure I don't know what to do with him! I don't think he is a bad boy, and yet he is always getting into some mischief."

We saw nothing of the child during the morning, but at the noon dinner he appeared. He looked strong and well and was neatly dressed, and was scrupulously clean, showing that the best possible care had been given to his bodily welfare. But an expression of irritability and discontent was on his face and his whole manner was that of extreme ennui. He had to be coaxed by both his grandfather and grandmother to eat his dinner, while his

mother looked on in distress, adding now and then a word or two of reproach or rebuke to the boy. I noticed, however, after a due amount of coaxing, he ate with the hearty relish of a healthy child.

A little later in the afternoon, Margaret and I were sitting on the porch in front of the house when he came wandering in listless fashion down the gravel walk towards the side gate. After a few moments of idle looking about, he began picking up pebbles and throwing them, one at a time, at the young turkeys and chickens that were scattered about in the back yard.

"Don't do that, Herbert," said his mother from the parlor window near by. The boy glanced up carelessly for a minute and then continued throwing the pebbles at the fowls. His face did not change in the slightest degree its expression of indifference. "Herbert!" called his grandmother from the rear of the house, "I have told you again and again that you *must not* throw stones at the chickens!" The boy smiled wearily as if recalling the oft-repeated but somewhat stupid command, then, selecting one or two large pebbles, he took deliberate aim at the defenseless fowls and threw

them singly, but so skillfully that one of them struck sharply against the wing of a young turkey, which ran off squawking until it reached a safe distance. "Herbert, Herbert!" called the grandmother in a tone of exasperation, "Didn't you hear what I said?"

"Oh, dear! What shall I do with that child," came plaintively from the parlor window. "He is always tormenting something or somebody!" Then the young mother added in a louder voice, "Herbert, mamma will certainly have to whip you again if you do not let grandma's chickens alone!" The boy glanced up, lifted his eyebrows slightly, and, gathering up some more pebbles, took a position a little to one side in order that he might aim more accurately at the chickens in the rear of the yard.

Margaret rose from the low chair in which she had been sitting and sauntered down the walk and began to pick up the pebbles also. The boy stopped his attack on the fowls and eyed her, at first contemptuously and then with some degree of curiosity. Soon she began laying her pebbles in regular rows about two inches apart. "What's that you are doing," said the child, as he came slowly toward her.

"These are the hop-gatherers going up the hill," she replied. "Don't you see," she continued quietly, without looking up, "these large pebbles are the women and the small ones are the boys and girls who go along to help." Master Herbert nonchalantly drew a little nearer, but unconsciously his face showed interest and surprise. She continued to place the smooth, white pebbles at regular intervals without seeming to take any further notice of the boy. He came a step or two nearer, then thrust his hands into his trousers pockets and stood looking down at her with the air of a superior being who was amused for the moment by the purile play of an inferior. She continued to extend the line of pebbles towards the gate. He noticed that she picked up one or two and then tossed them aside. "Why don't you use those pebbles?" said he, pointing condescendingly to one of them with the toe of his shoe. "Because I want only the clean, white ones," replied Margaret, still intent upon her work. "I want all the mothers to be beautiful and all their children to have clean faces." "See!" she added. "What a long line of them there is! They will soon be up to the hop fields picking the hops."

The curious, half-contemptuous look on his face changed slowly to one of amused interest. After a time, stooping down and picking up a smooth, white pebble, he handed it to her. "Good!" she said. "That's right, bring some more people from your neighborhood. We want all the workers we can get this week. That will do for a mother. Now, find her little boy and let him walk by her side." The scornful look, vanished from the child's face. Margaret and he were soon in high glee calling to each other from the two ends of the line that this or that woman had brought along two of her children, even three or four. "Where are the papas?" said the boy, rising from his stooping position that he might the better contemplate their work. "You may select some large pebbles for the fathers," said Margaret, "and put one by the side of each mother." He was delighted with the idea, and began working once more with lively energy. She next suggested that he build a large hop field at the upper end of the walk and put a fence of pebbles around it. Then excusing herself, saying she must go to her room for a few moments, she left him, busy and intent upon the completing of the repre-

sentation of this strange new life of the hop-gatherers into which he so lately had come, and which was so different from the city life to which he had been accustomed. When he entered the parlor a little later to ask Margaret to come out and see what he had made, his eyes were sparkling and his face was flushed with pleasure. Later on, after he had completed the work to his own satisfaction, he came once more to where his mother, Margaret and I sat talking, and, leaning affectionately on the arm of his mother's chair, he gazed eloquently into Margaret's face. The mother lovingly stroked his hair and said something laughingly about my friend's having captured her boy's heart. "Oh, no!" answered Margaret, quickly, "Herbert's heart is still with his mother. He and I have just been having some fun together. We'll have some more to-morrow, won't we, Herbert?" He nodded a delightful assent and began asking some eager and earnest questions about the hop-pickers. His grandfather came in just then and offered to take him to see the hop fields, which were less than half a mile away. The boy bounded off for his cap and the two walked down the gravel path hand in hand,

Herbert gayly asking questions and the happy grandfather answering them in a tone of voice which told of the pride he felt in having so intelligent a grandson. Soon after the two had disappeared Margaret came down dressed for a walk, and informed me that she was going by another path to the hop fields so as to surprise Herbert and his grandfather by meeting them there, "and also to gather some more facts for the romance Herbert and I are weaving," she added, as she pointed to the row of pebbles, laughingly, and then ran down the gavel walk.

"What a strange girl she is," said my hostess: "What possible *romance* can she find in playing with a few white pebbles and a five-year-old boy. In my day, girls of her age were thinking of clothes and beaux."

"In some unexplainable way she has touched my son's heart," said the young mother, gently. "I have not seen him as happy in a long time as he was when he came in from their play together. Herbert is of such an unhappy disposition. He is never satisfied, no matter how much we do for him." "Possibly that is the difficulty," I replied. "Perhaps you do too much for him. No child is

happy unless he is using his own powers. That is the law of all nature." Both women looked at me inquiringly and the grandmother said, sharply, "Stop your teacher-talk and tell us why Margaret was able to make Herbert happy in so short a time, when we had been taxing ourselves ever since he came to keep him out of mischief, not to speak of making him contented."

Seeing that they were really in earnest, I replied. "The expression on a child's face and the tone of his voice tell of his mental condition as surely as hectic flush or extreme pallor tell of physical condition. In your boy's case, these indicated to me, and I presume suggested the same to Margaret, that the world of fancy had not been opened to him. His mind had been fed on facts, and therefore his imagination had not had sufficient wholesome play. The imagination is the great awakener of creative thought. The boy instinctively longed to make his own world. Do we not each one of us want to fashion our own lives? In your extreme care of him you have crowded upon him things and facts *which you had selected* from *your* world of experiences and observations until

he was weary. All that Margaret did was to help him re-create in play the new world of country life into which he has so recently come. The long line of hop-pickers going past your house each morning is the one stirring event of the day, especially to a city child who knows more about city people than he does about nature. First, she aroused his curiosity by silently arranging the pebbles in such a way as to show that she had some definite plan in mind. This awakened his interest, and when he asked her what she was doing she plunged him into the life of the hop-pickers whom he had watched each morning climb the hill and disappear. With this difference, however: these were *his* hop-pickers and he could do what he chose with them. He not only reproduced the life about him by his play, and therefore began to understand that life better, but he idealized it and added what he felt it needed, by suggesting that the fathers walk with the mothers, and that they climb the hill together, also that three or four children were in some of the pebble-families. Thus, his sympathies were quickened by this world of poetic fancy into which the play had led him. You watched with keen

attention," continued I, turning to the young mother whose earnest eyes were inviting me to continue the explanation. "Having interested him in the hop-pickers, Margaret next led him to fence in a field of his own for them to come to. You may laugh if you wish, but could you see in the small activities of childhood the embryo activities of life at large as we kindergartners do, you would see in this simple building of an imaginary hop field the same insinct which Goethe portrayed in the aged Faust, when, having redeemed a new land from the sea, he called a free people to come and live upon it. This was one of the great Goethe's greatest insights. No soul is contented until it has created a world for itself and its own activity. You saw the brightness on Herbert's face as he came into the house. It was but the reflection of the brightness of the spirit within his breast which had been stirred by its own activity into creating a minature world, the hop field. If you will watch you will doubtless see Margaret develop this creative power in your boy in a hundred ways. To her this is not foolish play. It is an opportunity to quicken the heart of a little child, and to awaken in him a new and wonderful world

of poetry and romance, of ideals and activities which, if rightly directed, will lead him on to a larger and richer life than would be possible without such play."

The tears stood in the young mother's eyes. The grandmother and I rose, as by one instinct, and left her to ponder all these things in her heart as Mary of old had pondered in her heart *her* Child's Kingship. I was not an angel who had brought to Herbert's mother this message of her son's divine rights. But I was a kindergartner, and she had the mother-heart that eagerly listens to such messages, no matter who or what the messenger may be.

GERTRUDE'S STORY.

Gertrude had gone with her mother to a summer encampment where, during the summer, several missionary conferences, and one or two literary institutes were to be held—not that Gertrude cared particularly for either missionary conferences or literary institutes. She was a young woman of a practical turn of mind, but her mother was devoted to "the improvement of the sex" and was never happier than when in attendance upon a convention of some sort. Besides, this summer resort offered rowing and sailing as added attractions and Gertrude had been teaching all year and wanted the fresh out-of-door life these latter offered.

I fear I may have given you a wrong impression of my friend Gertrude. She was fond of her kindergarten work, and loved each child in it with an intensity that was almost pathetic; it showed so clearly how hungry the mother-heart within her was. Notwithstanding her study of "the fundamental interests of childhood," and "the universal tendency of the

race," each child was to her a joy, a wonder, a marvelous being, entirely unlike any other mortal.

Therefore, I was not surprised that she returned from her outing with many new and interesting stories of this and that child who had attracted her ever ready interest. Among the stories was the following: I will give it as nearly as I can in Gertrude's own language? She came in with the fresh, breezy way which was one of her gifts, tossed her hat on the sofa and dropped into a rocking-chair and began, "I haven't told you of that awful game the children played one afternoon while we were at Silver Lake, have I?" "No; what was it?" "Well, one morning mamma was bent on having me go with her to a mothers' missionary meeting, where Dr. Agnes Blank was going to speak on 'The little heathen of our city slums.'" "That was a good subject for women to think about, I am sure," I replied. "Did you go?" "No, I didn't," she answered, emphatically. "I can't bear to hear people talk about these children as if they were diseased or had to be set apart from other children! I would far rather take one dear, dirty little urchin up in my arms and carry him over to

where I could wash his face and hands, and then coddle him up in my lap and tell him a great big fairy tale, which would make his eyes dance, than to hear all the well-fed, well-dressed women in Christendom talk about 'the slum-children.'"

She gave her head a defiant toss, and continued, "I took mamma to the door of the big tent and then I strolled off to where I saw a group of children at play. The children were evidently from a number of different families, and were not accustomed to playing together, but they *all* knew the game of which I am going to tell you. It is called 'crossing the brook.' The children sat in a row on a log which they called their home. With a stick they had drawn a deep line in the sand. This represented the brook. The little girl chosen to play the mother stood in front of the rest of them with a long stick in her hand. She was extremely dramatic, throwing herself into play with an intensity that made my heart ache, it showed so much power so poorly used." The impulsive young kindergartner stopped short in her narrative, and, turning her head away from me, stared out of the window. I waited a moment or two and then said,

"Well, what about the game?" "Oh, I don't know that I have a right to talk about it. I ought to have joined in with them and taught the blessed little souls some better game; I knew a score that they would have enjoyed just as heartily. It is so much easier to criticise than to help set things right." "But what of the game?" I said, "Tell me about it."

"Perhaps I am foolish," she said, "but it hurt me. It was this: The child who was playing the part of mother walked up and down in front of the row of children much as a policeman might walk back and forth in front of a row of prisoners, then another child jumped up and exclaimed, 'Mother, may I go out to play?' 'No,' answered the mother, sharply. 'Oh, Mother, I *want* to go out to play!' cried the child. 'I don't care, you shan't go!' said the mother, shaking the stick at her. 'Why can't I go out to play?' whined the child. 'Because I say you can't," shouted the mother, flourishing the stick in the air. '*Please* let me go,' whined the child. 'No, I won't,' cried the mother, stamping her foot. 'Oh, please let me go,' again whined the child. Then she pretended to cry. 'Oh, well,' said the dramatic little mother, in a tone of utter

weariness of spirit, 'if you begin to cry I s'pose I shall have to let you go, you little tease! But don't go across the brook! There, go along with you!' "

Gertrude was re-enacting the scene so vividly that she unconsciously gave a shove to an imaginary child in front of her, and her own tone was that of a weak, querulous mother yielding to her child's entreaty, even though it was against her own judgment. I smiled, but my storyteller did not notice it.

"Of course," she continued, throwing out her hand with a gesture of despair, "The child in the game immediately ran over the brook to the other side, where she danced up and down in triumphant glee while each of the other children went through the same domestic drama of coaxing, cajoling, whining and teasing, until the mother's consent had been obtained for each to go out to play, the final injunction each time being, 'But don't go across the brook.'

"After all the children were across the brook the mother suddenly seemed to awaken to her responsibility, and cried out, 'My children! my children! It is after dark! Where are my children?' Then she called out in a tone of

assumed distress, 'Children!' 'What?' answered the children, impudently. 'Where are you?' called the mother, peering to right and left with her hand shading her eyes as if searching the darkness for her neglected offspring. 'Where are you?' she cried again. 'Across the brook!' they shouted in chorus. 'How shall I get to you?' called the mother. 'With sticks and stones!' shouted the children, derisively. 'What if I break my bones?' called the mother. 'We'll be glad of it! we'll be glad of it! Goody! goody! goody!' shouted the children. Then they all ran wildly about, the mother chasing them with her stick. The one she first touched with her stick was mother next time, and the game was repeated with a little more roughness and insolence each time. It was evidently a game made by children, not by grown people. But what do you think of it?" Gertrude was leaning forward now, her blue eyes looking earnestly into mine. Then she added without waiting for my reply, "What do you think the mother of two of those children said to me when that evening I told her of the game?" "What?" I asked. "'Oh, well,' she drawled out, 'I don't think it matters much what children play, so that they

are occupied and keep out of mischief.' 'What do you call mischief?' said I. 'Oh, so they don't play with fire or get into the water.' And yet that woman," exclaimed Gertrude, rising to her feet to add emphasis to her words, "that woman had subscribed twenty dollars that very morning to the fund for the improvement of the morals of the 'slum-children!' What do you think of such a mother?" "I think," I replied, "that she was like thousands of other mothers who do not understand the deep significance of play, nor the influence which the part that a child plays has upon him. If mothers understood that the emotions are more easily stirred through play and the interest more readily awakened by it than in any other way, we would have kindergartens springing up all over the land." Gertrude sighed and dropped into a chair as she exclaimed, "When *will* that day come!"

MISS ELEANOR'S GARDEN.

Miss Eleanor Hutchins was what you might have called "a typical old maid"—that is, if you had never seen her garden in spring or summer, or had never chanced, on a cold winter's day, to pass her bay-window, gorgeous with bright rows of blossoming plants and green ferns.

Somehow, garden plants grew and multiplied in her side garden as nowhere else, and potted plants bloomed all winter long in her windows, as if touched by an enchantress' wand. Perhaps the love and care she bestowed upon them *was* a kind of magic felt by them. How do we know how much plants can feel the mood of the human being who tends them? That's a question the scientists of the future will have to answer.

However, if you had ever leaned over the picket fence to look at her tall hollyhocks in the rear, with the eastern sunlight shining through their crimson and pink cup-shaped blossoms, making them look like huge jewels, or to wonder at the profusion of the white,

pink, lilac, purple and yellow asters, or to sniff the spicy odor of her red and yellow nasturtiums that rioted in rich abandon over the side fence as no other nasturtiums this side of California ever dared to riot, or to admire her dignified row of foxgloves, superbly aristocratic in their exclusive hues and tones of color, not to speak of the appeal that would be made to you by the more modest beauty of the heliotrope and quiet mignonette, to say nothing of the border of pert English daisies and saucy pansies—I say if you had this experience, or had ever had the more subtle pleasure of finding that you had involuntarily smiled back courteous return for the smile which her winter window boxes had seemed to give you, you would never have thought of her spinsterhood, for you would have known that a motherly, warm-hearted woman lived in the little white house shaded by the two tall elms in front.

Miss Eleanor's garden was the pride of the neighborhood, as well as one of the deep joys of her life; so when the new family moved into the red brick house next door, and it became known that they were well-to-do city folks and had moved to a country town on ac-

count of their only child, a boy of eight, there were many misgivings and shakings of heads, for our village people had learned from sad experience that city boys, usually summer boarders or visiting relatives, knew and cared nothing for nature's beauties. They generally betrayed their inner savage condition by skinning the bark off of the tree trunks, swinging on slender branches until they broke them off, trampling down the flower beds unless they were stopped, and when allowed to go into the fields to gather wild flowers, grabbing handsful of them, and frequently pelting each other with them.

Such conduct seemed nothing short of criminal to our small community, most of whom could not understand that these dreaded city boys, never having been taught to love nature, were merely manifesting the savage delight of showing their mastery over her by abusing her and destroying her beauty.

"'Tain't no use plantin' yer garden this year, Miss Eleanor," grumbled the old gardener who for thirty years had spaded and raked Miss Eleanor's garden for her. "That there boy next door will tear up everything you plant. I never seen such a destructive feller! He jest

sets on the grass and pulls it up by the handful and throws it at the dog. I seen him break off a great big limb from ol' Miss Grayson's lilac bush, jest fur sheer cussedness. He never done nothin' with it, jest thrashed it around a bit and then throwed it away. You ain't a-goin' to be able to keep your garden like it used to be, with that there boy next door," and the old man shook his head. Miss Eleanor smiled. She had a way of getting along amicably with most people, and she did not doubt her ability to do so with the boy next door. Still, she was wise enough to know that the pent-up energy of the new neighbor's boy must find vent somehow, so early next day, being one of those bright spring days that makes mere existence a joy, she called pleasantly to the boy, asking him if he would not come over and dig some holes in the newly-prepared garden, as she wanted to set out her pansies. What boy is there who could resist an invitation to dig holes in the ground? It is a *racial instinct,* and dates back thousands of years to those old Aryan ancestors who changed from hunters and shepherds to tillers of the soil.

The pale-faced new boy was over the fence

in a minute, and soon he and Miss Eleanor were busy with what was to him the entirely new and delightful activity, namely that of setting out potted plants. Of course, Miss Eleanor managed to have two of the pots of pansies left over, and in a matter-of-course sort of way proposed that the new boy should plant them in his garden. *"My garden!"* exclaimed the boy. A sudden light leaped up into his eyes and then died down as he added, almost derisively, "Pshaw, I haven't any garden!" "But you can have one," said Miss Eleanor. "The last people who lived in that house had a beautiful garden. You can dig it up yourself, and I'll show you how to plant it and care for it."

To make a long story short, the boy's garden became a reality, and Miss Eleanor and he became fast friends. She found him a shy, sensitive lad, terribly afraid of being laughed at. It seems that one of his father's amusements had been ridiculing the child and making fun of anything he said that was at all out of the commonplace. Of course the father meant no harm by it. He was working hard to pile up a bank account for the boy to have by and by, but his habit of making fun of

everything that the boy did had caused the child to grow silent and reserved in mere self-defense.

However, few people could resist Miss Eleanor Hutchins' friendliness, and the sunshine and fresh air helped to thaw out the hidden corners in the child's heart. As the pale face grew tanned in the open air, the painful self-consciousness grew less also, because he was busy now, working side by side with a friend who did not ridicule everything he said, but seemed instead to be really interested in what he was thinking of.

One morning, about two months after the friendship had begun, the two were digging up the weeds in Miss Eleanor's pansy border. "Why do you want the weeds dug up?" asked the boy. "Because they are ugly and greedy," replied Miss Eleanor, "They take all the best of the food the soil has to give, so there is not enough left for our pretty flowers." "God made the flowers, didn't he?" said the boy, stopping suddenly. "Yes," said Miss Eleanor, "and isn't it wonderful," she continued, "how one flower will come up yellow and another will come up purple?" She lightly touched a nasturtium blossom and a pansy with the tip

of her trowel as she spoke. "And yet they both come out of the same ground and are warmed by the same sunshine and watered by the same rain." The boy nodded his head thoughtfully, then gazed far off into space for a few minutes, as was his habit. His face and attitude showed that he was feeling the presence of a power beyond man's power, that sense of infinite mystery which comes to us all when once we really think of the marvelous miracles which nature is constantly revealing to us. It was perhaps the earliest dawn of the religious instinct in the race—when man began to look through nature up to nature's God. Miss Eleanor worked on in silence. She knew the boy too well to intrude upon his thoughts just then.

By and by some soft, tiny, white cottonwood seeds floated down from the tall tree in the neighboring yard. One of them touched the little boy's hand and settled down upon it. "Tell me about this," said the boy, as if suddenly awakening from a dream. He held out his hand, in which the tiny cottonwood seed lay. "That," said Miss Eleanor, "is a seed from the big cottonwood tree over there. All spring it has been growing and growing and

drinking more and more of the rain and juices of the soil that came to it from its roots far down underground, and every day it has stretched out its branches just a little farther, that it might get more air and more sunshine, so that it could make these tiny little seeds." As she spoke she took the small seed from the boy's hand and looked admiringly at it, as one might look upon a jewel or a rare bit of carving. The boy leaned forward and looked eagerly at it also. "Tell me about it, all about it," he said, in an earnest, expectant tone. The woman smiled. The miracles of the seasons were to her the greatest of all miracles, and the illumined book of nature was her favorite book. "Did you ever think of it," she said, as she laid down her trowel and picked up a number of the white-winged seeds that had drifted into a small heap near by, "every one of these tiny, tiny seeds has within it the power to become a great big cottonwood tree, as large, possibly, as that great big tree over there."

The boy involuntarily moved a trifle closer to her, and looking into her eyes, said in a low tone, "God made those little seeds too, didn't He?" "Yes," she answered, reverently,

"God made all our garden and all the trees and everything that grows in all the fields. They are all telling us how good and wise He is." And now a troubled, puzzled look came into the boy's face. After a moment of embarrassed silence he said, somewhat hesitatingly, as if fearing a rebuke, "Why did God make the weeds ugly and give them a bad odor? Why didn't He make them as beautiful as He made the flowers?" The mother-heart in the woman almost stopped beating. How could she answer that question so as to satisfy the young soul before her? He had uttered the cry of all humanity, had asked the question as old as the human race. "What is evil? Why is it in the world?" The conflict of the inner life as portrayed in that oldest of all dramas, the story of Job, rose before her. How was she to satisfy this childish heart?

"We cannot always understand why God does as He does, but we know that He is wise and good because we see so many good and beautiful things around us that He has put there to help us. But I think," she added, softly, "that perhaps He wanted us to understand Him better and love Him more, so He has let us help Him make the world beautiful."

"You know," she continued, a rare smile lighting her face as she spoke, "all the beautiful flowers were once what we call weeds, and it is because men have taken care of them and helped them to grow the best they could that they have changed into flowers. And these weeds have in them possibilities of becoming beautiful flowers if we will only learn how to take care of them. Don't you see, God is letting us help take care of the world, just as I let you help me take care of my garden and you let me help you take care of your garden. Isn't it a wonderful thought that we can help God make His world more beautiful!"

The boy made no answer, but his hand reached out and took hold of hers. They sat thus in silence for a few minutes. Just then his mother came to her back door and called to the boy to come home and study his Sunday-school lesson. It was a rather difficult lesson that week, it was the condemnation of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Miss Eleanor picked up her garden tools and, putting them into her basket, went into her own house. As she passed through the kitchen the maid asked, "What have you been

doing this morning?" and Eleanor Hutchins, spinster, answered quietly, "I have been sowing some seeds."

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